

Sixty-ninth
Anniversary of the Theological Seminary,
PRINCETON, N. J.

Presented by Mr. Samuel Agnew of Philadelphia, Pa.



Agnew Coll. on Baptism, No.

SCB

10356





FIVE DISCOURSES.

CONTAINING

A CAREFUL ENQUIRY INTO THE NATURE
OF THE RELIGION GOD ENJOINED ON THE
CHURCH UNDER THE OLD TESTAMENT
DISPENSATION.

BEING

An Attempt to Vindicate the
BAPTISM OF INFANTS,

A PLAN IN ^{ON} SOME RESPECTS

N E W.

BY THE
REV. ELIPHALET ~~S~~ STEELE, A. M.
Pastor of the First Church in the town of
Paris, [N. Y.]

He that hath ears to hear let him hear.

JESUS CHRIST.

These were more noble than those at Thessalonica,
in that they received the word with all readiness
of mind, AND SEARCHED THE SCRIP-
TURES DAILY WHETHER THESE THINGS
WERE SO.

St. PAUL.

Search the Scriptures. [JESUS CHRIST.

SHERBURNE, (*Chenango county.*)
Printed; By ABRAHAM ROMYEN,
For the Author.—1805.



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A Careful Enquiry &c.

Discourse. I.

Gen. XVII 1. *WALK before me, and be thou perfect.*

Rom. XI 20. *WELL; because of unbelief they were broken off.*

THE command, *Walk before me, and be thou perfect*, states, briefly, the term or condition of the covenant, which was now stipulating between JEHOVAH, and Abraham. Which being performed, God, by promise, gave him, and his seed assurance, that they should enjoy certain privileges, and blessings. The other part of the text assigns the reason the seed of Abraham were deprived of promised blessings. A compliance with the command would insure an accomplishment of the promise; but a noncompliance would cut them off from promised good.

IN the 17 Chap. of Gen. there is a more clear, full, and explicit exhibition of the covenant of grace, than had ever yet been made. In the following threatening denounced against Satan Gen. 3. 15. *It (the seed of the woman) shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel,* which, no doubt, was delivered in the

hearing of our first parents, God gave them an intimation of his merciful, and gracious purpose. But the gracious purpose of God, in dealing with sinners, in a way of covenanted mercy, was never so explicitly stated, altho' often mentioned, nor so clearly expressed, as it is in this solemn, and important federal transaction with Abraham.

THE holy God was now about to set up a holy church in a particular nation, which He designed to distinguish, greatly, and dignify, highly, above all other nations on earth : for to them were to pertain, * *The adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving the law, and the service of God, and the promises.* Abraham, therefore, who was the root of that nation, and of the church, God calls || *From his country, and his kindred, and from his father's house,* and makes a covenant with him : † and his seed after him, in their generations.

FOR the divine conduct in the call of Abraham, there is an obvious reason. He was a man eminent for piety—strong in faith. But in his days it is supposed, the corruption of mankind had become general : The world was almost wholly over-run with idolatry. If there had not been some extraordinary interposition of divine providence, the probability was, that, in a few generations more, the true religion would have been, totally, extinct. That the true religion might be maintained, and propagated among mankind, the infinitely wise God saw it was necessary to adopt a mode of procedure, different from what had yet taken place. To answer his wise, and gracious purpose, He saw fit to separate one family from the rest of the world. That family from which, in due

* Rom. 9. 4. || Gen. 12. 1. † Gen. 17.

time, the saviour was to proceed. Abraham, who lived in the land of the Chaldees, a country infamous for idolatry, is the person designated by the eternal councils of God. In his family the true religion was to be supported : & of his seed, according to the flesh, was the Redeemer to be. He is, therefore, by the immediate call, & appointment of God, separated from his native country, and his former connections, and friends, and goes into a country far distant. There he lived, tho' among mankind, yet separate, and distinct from them. While the world, generally was over-run with heathenism, and superstition, and idolatry ; true religion was to be supported, by Abraham, and his posterity.

In the covenant transaction with Abraham, God required something of him as a term, or condition, with which, on his part, he was under obligation to comply. And his compliance with the command, would be the ground of the Divine procedure, in accomplishing what God had promised. The command is this, *Walk before me, and be thou perfect* ; which enjoins moral virtue, or real religion. For when the term *perfect* is used in the scriptures, in reference to the character of moral beings, it means an holy, or religious character. The precept, then, enjoins all moral virtue—the practice of every duty by which a religious, or holy character is formed. This God required of Abraham. For God, being infinitely holy, would not act consistently with the perfection of his own nature, should he require any thing of moral beings short of real holiness : and indeed he never requires any thing short of perfect holiness. Nothing, therefore, in the character of a moral subject, is viewed with complacency, by God, any farther than there is a conformity

in him, to the infinitely pure, and holy nature of God.

RELIGION, therefore, **Pure religion and undefiled before God, and the Father,* was required of Abraham ; and not any thing short of that. Evidence of this appears, if attention be paid to the promise God made to him. The promise is || *I will be a God to thee.* A promise of this nature, and importance is never made to the wicked. The promise itself, is, therefore, evidence that Abraham sustained a pious, or holy character. The Land of Canaan is also promised, as a present good ; and also as a type of Heaven ; because the covenant, which God was now stipulating with Abraham, was to remain in force forever. The following are God's own words. † *And I will establish my covenant between me and thee,—for an everlasting covenant : to be a God unto thee.* Agreeably to this we find, that God, long after Abraham was dead, calls himself, ‡ *The God of Abraham.*

IT is further to be observed ; that God, in the preceptive part of the covenant, not only taught Abraham what he required of him and in the promissory part, what he might expect from God, if he were obedient ; but in this whole transaction, respect is had to his posterity. For the same is required of Abraham's seed, which is required of him ; and the same is promised to them, which is promised to him. Did God require of Abraham, real religion when he said to him, *walk before me, and be thou perfect ?* the same he required of his seed, in all their generations. In the Old Testament, this command frequently occurs : *Be ye holy :* or * *Jam. i. 27.* || *Gen. 17. 7.* † *Gen. 17. 7.* ‡ *Exod. 3. 15.*

thus

thus, *Ye shall be holy.* Did God promise to be a God to Abraham, in consequence of his being an holy, or pious person? Upon the same consideration, God makes the same promise to his seed. * *To be a God unto thee, and thy seed after thee.* And the promise, which respects giving the land of Canaan to Abraham, and his seed, is, solely, on the supposition, that they sustained an holy character, and lived in the practice of real religion. So that, the accomplishment of the Divine promises, in which God gave them assurance of the enjoyment of many, and very great privileges, and blessings, depended, entirely, upon their supporting religion among them, and being, really, in *heart*, an holy people.

LET it be observed again : that in this important transaction between God, and Abraham, in which his seed are included, no mention is made of ceremonial worship. That mode of worship, in its various rites, was not enjoined on the Israelites, until more than four hundred years after the covenant God made with Abraham. Hence it is obvious, that the ceremonial law is not an essential part of the Abrahamic covenant. For had it been, it must have been appointed, and immediately observed, when *that covenant* was first established. And that the ceremonial law, or Sinai covenant, is not an essential part of the Abrahamic, is evident by this also ; the duty enjoined, might be performed, and the good promised, might be enjoyed, without an observance of ceremonial institutions. If not, then Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the patriarchs ; & indeed all good people, who died before the ceremonial law was enacted at Mount Sinai,

* Gen. 17. 7.

had no part in the God of Abraham : nor was God, the God of Abraham.

AFTER the God of Israel had expressed his mind respecting positive institutions, it is granted, that then the Israelites were under indispensable obligation to do, punctually, whatever God required. But the ceremonial law was only an adjunct to the Abrahamic covenant : for it did not exist until *four hundred and thirty years after*, as St. Paul tells us * The Sinai covenant, therefore, was not essential to the existence of the Abrahamic. This might exist, and operate, and did, with, or without the Sinai covenant.

WHEN God promised to be a God to Abraham and his seed, it was understood to be on condition that he, and they kept covenant with God : by maintaining a character really holy, in the practice of moral virtue : and a neglect of duty would amount to a forfeiture of promised good.

To ratify the covenant made with Abraham, and his seed, in all succeeding generations, God saw fit to appoint circumcision for its seal. This seal was to be applied to Abraham, and all his male seed. To him God gave this direction: ¶ *Every man-child among you shall be circumcised. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man-child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money, of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. It shall be a token of the covenant between me and you.* This was to be a mark, or token by which the church, or people of God were to be distinguished from the world.

The command in the text is exceedingly broad : The promise is exceedingly great and

* Gal. 3. 17. ¶ Gen. 17. 10. 11. 12.

precious. The command enjoins all moral virtue : in the promise all spiritual good is included ; for more or better than himself, God cannot promise. And the promise is, *I will be a God to thee and thy seed after thee.*

FROM the call of Abraham, almost two thousand years rolled away before that event took place, which St. Paul mentions in the text. So long divine patience spared that wicked nation, and means were used to bring them to repentance, before *they were broken off for their unbelief.* In all ages, the dispensations of divine providence, towards the Israelites, were wonderful. For a long time, by the ceremonial law, the gospel was preached to them.— Frequently were they, as one expresses it, “miracles of mercy and judgment.” Mercies, and judgments, were sent, to instruct, and warn, to convince, and reform them. For the same purpose God sent prophets, and John Baptist, and Jesus Christ, and his apostles. God used means with them abundantly, to keep them near to himself, in the practice of his holy religion. But all were ineffectual. They degenerated, on the whole, more and more, they waxed worse, and worse. The axe, therefore, which had long lain at the root of the trees * God takes in hand, and hews them down, and casts them into the fire. Or as it is expressed by the apostle, *They were broken off.* This UNBELIEF is assigned, by the pen of inspiration, to be the reason they were *broken off.* If the Jews for their unbelief were *broken off*, it is hence certain, that faith, and consequently, moral virtue, was required in that command, *walk before me, and be thou perfect.* And not only Abraham, but also all his posterity were

* Mat. 3. 10.

bounden by that command, to the practice of real religion. And it was by a compliance with the precept, that they were to hold, and enjoy promised blessings, and privileges. The Abrahamic covenant was the charter by which they held all their privileges ; and if they complied with the terms, or conditions of it, they were to hold, and enjoy them forever. Blessings, the best in kind, and the greatest in degree.—But there was a forfeiture of promised blessings. It is asked, “what did God’s people do, by which the forfeiture was made ?” the answer is, they *killed the prince of life*. Murdered God’s own son. After his resurrection, some of his murderers became his converts : and there were *thousands of Jews which believed* : || The christian church, therefore, consisted, at first, of Jewish members. But the great body of the nation persisted in rejecting Christ, and his gospel, and wherever the apostles of our Lord travelled, if there were Jews, they, generally, united in opposing, and persecuting them : and the doctrines of the cross preached by the apostles, were rejected with pure malignity.—Persisting in this conduct so uniformly, and so long, they formed a character, so abominable in the sight of the holy ONE of Israel, that divine patience could spare them no longer ; wrath, therefore, came on them to the uttermost. They had rejected God, and now he rejects them. God says, * *Ye are not my people, and I will not be your God.* The reason why God rejected them is assigned by the apostle : well : because of unbelief they were broken off.

THE different sentiments embraced, by paedobaptists, and antipaedobaptists, respecting the baptism of infants, although they may branch out into many particulars, do. || *Acts, 21. 20. * Hos. 1. 9.* however,

however, originate from their understanding, differently, what is the nature of, and what God required in, the Abrahamic covenant. It is the opinion of the Antipædobaptists that the Abrahamic covenant was a covenant of property : a religion, therefore, pure, & holy, was not required, as the condition of enjoying promised blessings. And say they, the church under the Old Testament dispensation, was civil, political, or national : under that dispensation, therefore, holiness was not required as a term of church-membership. Nor were they required by God, to be really holy, in order to their being his people or church.

In opposition to this sentiment, we believe the Abrahamic covenant was the covenant of grace : and the only covenant of grace, in essence, that ever was, or ever will be exhibited to man. Moral virtue, or real religion, was, therefore, required, as the term or condition of enjoying the good promised : and in order to Church-membership : and the church under the Old Testament dispensation was the true church of God, and, therefore, holy : possessing the same character, in kind, which Abraham had, when God call'd him, from his kindred, and country.

IN the introduction to the following discourses, it was judged important to attend particularly, to the Abrahamic covenant, that in the outset, we might get on Bible ground.— Clear, and decided proof, it is believed, has been offered by which it appears with certainty, that the command, *walk before me; and be thou perfect*, enjoined on Abraham moral virtue, or real religion ; and that the promises were made to him, in consideration of his maintaining an holy character. And the covenant respected
not

not only, Abraham, but also his seed: in all generations, in regard both to precept, and promise : or duties and privileges: So that, their enjoying what was promised, depended, wholly, on their doing what was required.

THESE sentiments, being the foundation of the following discourses, and the central point of dispute between the baptists, and us ; in regard to the difference between the church under the Old Testament, and the New : And in regard to the subjects of baptism under the gospel ; it was thought necessary to obtain accurate, and scriptural ideas of the Abrahamic covenant, which was in operation thro' the Old Testament dispensation, is in operation, now under the gospel ; and will operate so long as the Sun, and Moon endures ; and the happy, and glorious benefits of it will be enjoyed, by the redeemed when Suns, and Moons shall shine no more.

In further prosecuting the subject before us, we shall attend to the following things.

I. The nature of the religion required of the Israelites under the Old Testament dispensation.

II. Some of the privileges, and blessings which God promised them, will be brought to view.

III. It will then be shown, that the only condition of their enjoying the blessings, and privileges promised, was, their living in the practice of the religion God required of them.

I. The nature of the religion required of the Israelites under the Old Testament dispensation, will be examined.

As the federal transaction between God, and Abraham, is the foundation of the religion enjoined on the Israelites, in the public revelation

of it, in regard to duty, and enjoyment, or precept's and promises, this comprehensive precept, *walk before me, and be thou perfect*, requires, as has been observed, real holiness : or every moral duty.

To WALK, is a term used in the Bible, when it has regard to character, denoting that which is prevalent in the life, and conversation of a person : or that which is the leading object of his pursuit. It is used in reference, both to virtuous, and vicious characters. They who are in Christ Jesus *WALK not after the flesh, but after the spirit. The wicked Israelites it is said, ¶ WALKED every one in the imagination of their evil heart. Of Hoshea it is said, † He WALKED in the statutes of the Heathen. The good kings of Judah WALKED in the ways of pious David : The wicked kings of Israel WALKED in the ways of impious Jereboam.—Enoch WALKED with God ; so also it is said of Noah.

THE term perfect, in the general use of it, when applied to characters, means the same as sincere, or upright. What is meant by it is, the person supports a religious character : or lives in the practice of piety, or moral virtue. Of Noah it is said, he was a just man, and perfect in his generation. Of Job, he was perfect, and upright. Hezekiah prays ; Remember, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee with a perfect heart. Again, mark the perfect man—his end is peace. David resolves, I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. Solomon observes, The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way.

By these observations, the nature, extent, and importance of the command in the Abra-

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* Rom. 8. 1. ¶ Jer. 11. 8. † 2 Kings, 17. 8

hamie covenant, *Walk before me and be thou perfect*, is very obvious. Of Abraham and his seed, in all their generations Holiness was required: that kind of holiness which is a conformity to the moral perfections of God. Thus Moses is directed. † *Speak unto all the congregation of the Children of Israel, and say unto them: ye shall be holy; for I the Lord your God am holy.*

IN taking a view of the religion enjoined on the Israelites by God, as the sole condition of their enjoying the privileges, & blessings which he promised, under the Old Testament dispensation, it may be observed,

I. A real change of heart was absolutely necessary, in order to having, and living in the practice of the religion God required of the Israelites.

THE moral state of the hearts of all men, since the fall, is such, that, in order to live in the practice of moral virtue, or true religion, there must be a real change. This is equally true of one as well as another. It is true of all. Our Saviour, when conversing with Nicodemus, observes; * *Verily, verily, I say unto thee except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* By this declaration Nicodemus is taught the necessity of a real change of heart. He is surprised at the sentiment, and exclaims, * *How can these things be!* For his ignorance, our Saviour gives him a very grave rebuke; and lets him know, that his ignorance was owing to a criminal neglect of the scriptures of the Old Testament. His observation is, * *Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?* As if our Saviour had said; What! “you, Nicodemus a teacher in Israel, and yet so ignorant of your own scriptures!

How

† *Lev. 19. 2.* * *John. 3. 3.* * *V. 9.* * *V. 10.*

How can it be?" That the doctrine of regeneration is plainly taught in the Old Testament, is supposed, by the reproof given to Nicodemus, by our Saviour; if not, why is he blamed for his ignorance?

THIS doctrine was taught the Israelites by Moses, when he said, * *And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.* The same sentiment is expressed by David when he prayed: † *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.* The same is taught in these words. ** *I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.* By the prophet Isaiah God says: || *I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring.* The doctrine of regeneration is also taught by Jeremiah, when God says by him, ‡ *And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me forever, for the good of them, and of their children after them.* In these words, also, is the nature of regeneration taught. § *I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you, And I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and I will give them an heart of flesh.* Then follows the consequence of this change of heart. *That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them.* In another place it is said.—*A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you*

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*Deut. 30. 6. †Psal. 51. 10. **Prov. 1. 23.
||Isai. 44. 3. ‡Jer. 32. 39. §Ezek. 11. 19. 20.
¶ Chap. 36, 26, 27,

an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. Israel is commanded to have a new heart, and to regenerate themselves. ¶ *Circumcise, therefore, the foreskin of your hearts, and be no more stiff-necked.* And they are required to do this on pain of eternal damnation. †*Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed, and make you a new heart, and a new spirit; for why will ye die, O House of Israel.* The command, it is to be observed, is addressed to the *house of Israel*: the whole nation.

FROM the texts of scripture which have now been adduced, it is evident, that a real change of heart is necessary in order to the existence of an holy character. 'And no Israelite was possessed of moral virtue, or sustained such an holy character as God required, unless God did *circumcise his heart to love the LORD, and serve him*, unless God gave him *a new heart and a new spirit*. A foundation for the existence of an holy character was laid, only, in spiritual circumcision, or regeneration.

2. THE religion enjoined on the Israelites in the old Testament consisted in benevolent affection—disinterested love to God and man.

WHAT their mental exercises must be, in regard to himself, God taught them when he said * *Thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.* The command is addressed to all Israel. * *Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God is one LORD.* The duty of love to God is urged, and pressed, very abundantly, on the Israelites. || *And now O Israel, what doth the LORD*

* *Deut. 10. 16. 31. † Ezek. 18. 31* * *Deut. 6. 5. ¶ v 4. || Deut. 10. 12.*

LORD thy God require, of thee, but to love him. Again † Therefore, thou shalt love the LORD thy God.—And to the same effect frequently.

IN the following precept, God taught them what the feelings of their heart must be, towards their neighbor. ‡ *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.* In this, disinterested love to their neighbor was required. They were required, always to exercise benevolence towards others ; whoever they might be, or of what nation soever. § *Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite.* Again, *Thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian.* The duty, contrary to hating, is implied. *Thou shall love an Edomite : Thou shall love an Egyptian.*

THESE two commands, which require love to God, and our neighbor, comprehend, summarily, all that God requires in the old Testament, in regard to moral virtue, as appears by the answer our Saviour gave the lawyer, who asked him, ¶. *Which is the greatest commandment in the law ?* Jesus said unto him, *thou shalt love the LORD thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.* Our Saviour then observes ; *on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.* This is old Testament religion the sum of what Moses and the prophet's taught : nor does God make promises, to any kind of religion but this. All the promises made to Israel, suppose the existence of benevolent affection, Love to God, and their neighbor : they suppose the existence of real religion.

3. REPENTANCE is another branch of religion

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required

†. Deut. 11. 1. and 22. see also 19. 9. and 30. 6.

‡Lev. 19. 18. § Deut. 23. 7. ¶ Mat. 22. 36.
to 40.

required of the Israelites under the old Testament dispensation.

We can form no consistant idea of a religion instituted purposely, for sinners, if repentance be not an essential part of it. To suppose a sinner under the governing influence of such a temper of heart, as that is, in which his impenitency consists can maintain an holy character by living in obedience to God, is incompatible with revealed religion ; and the whole of the moral character of God. Accordingly we find when we read Moses and the prophets, that, the Israelites, in a view of their exceeding wickedness, are exhorted, and directed, very frequently, to the duty of *repentance*. Such kind of commands and exhortations being so frequent a few, only will be specified. This is one.

* *Wash you make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes ; cease to do evil : learn to do well.* Again || *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts ; and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God for he will abundantly pardon.* † *Thus saith the LORD God, repent and turn yourselves from your idols, and turn your faces from all your abominations.* One instance more, only, will be mentioned. ‡ *O Israel, return unto the LORD thy God ; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and turn to the LORD, and say unto him, take away all iniquity and receive us graciously.*

4. Of the Israelites God required *faith*, as another branch of religion, which was to exist under the Old Testament.

WHEN God revealed a saviour to our first

^{parents,}
* *Isai. 1. 16. 17.* || *Isai. 55. 7.* † *Ezek. 14. 6.* ‡ *Hes. 14. 1. 2.*

parents, * it was their duty, by faith to embrace him. Dying Jacob prophesying concerning the coming of Jesus Christ saith, ¶ unto him shall the gathering of the people be. God by the prophet gives this command : † *Look unto me and be ye saved all the ends of the earth.* The prophet resolves, ‡ *Therefore I will look unto the LORD ; I will wait for the God of my salvation.* The same is meant in the Old Testament, by the terms waiting, looking and trusting, and the like, when God is the object, waited on, looked to, or trusted in ; as is meant in the New Testament, by the terms believe, come, and cleave, when Jesus Christ is the object to which the soul cleaves, or comes, and in which it believes.

WHERE Jesus Christ is revealed to sinners, it is their duty, immediately, to believe in him. He was revealed to the Israelites : so the apostle saith, § *He was preached to them.* He was preached in the promises, types, and prophecies and even the histories, and genealogies in the Old Testament are full of Christ ; all have an ultimate respect to him. Then it must certainly be true, that faith in our LORD Jesus Christ was a branch of Old Testament religion. The Israelites were all under obligation to believe in him.

SINNERS have not such a character as God approves : nor do they *do* what God acceptis, nor have they a title to the promises, unless they are believing sinners :—sinful creatures acting faith in the Mediator. By this faith, they will form a character which God approves ; it will qualify them for serving God acceptably ; and unite them to Christ—The consequence is, they have a title to the promises of the covenant

* Gen. 3. 15. ¶ Gen. 49. 10. † Isai. 45. 22.
‡ Mic. 7. 7. § Heb. 4. 2.

nant of grace. But there was no covenant of grace made known to man, if the Abrahamic covenant be set aside; for we may with the same propriety set aside every thing in the Old Testament, respecting Christ, and salvation, as the Abrahamic covenant. From this it will follow, that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, & all the patriarchs, and prophets *are perished*: not one Israelite is saved, who lived, and died under that dispensation; if there were no covenant of grace, and if Jesus Christ were not revealed to, and believed on, in the world. This sentiment is too extravagant for any one to admit, who believes in divine revelation.

5. THE Old Testament required a religion of the heart.

By heart religion is meant, a religion which consists in right, or holy affections of herat. Accordingly, we have this command: * *My son, give me thine heart.* And also this || *My son, forget not my law: but let thine HEART keep my commandments.* Moses says to Israel, † *Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy SOUL diligently, least thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy HEART all the days of thy life.* But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him; if thou seek him with all thy HEART, and with all thy SOUL. Joshua directs the Israelites in these words ‡ *Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity, and in truth.* Solomon gives the following direction. § *Let your heart therefore be perfect with the Lord your God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day.* King David addressed his son Solomon with these

* *Pr. 23. 26.* || *Pro. 3. 1. † Deut. 4. 9. and 9. 2. ‡ Jos. 24. 14. § 1st King. 8. 61.*

these impressive words ¶ *And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy Father: and serve him with a perfect HEART and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts if thou seek him he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever.* David's prayer is ** *Let integrity and uprightness preserve me.*

THESE instances are but a few, of the many, which might be bro't to view, in which God required heart religion of the Israelites under the Old Testament dispensation. It is as plainly required under that dispensation, as it is under the gospel.

6. IT is evident, from a view of the scriptures of the Old Testament, that God enjoined on the children of Israel a religion, which consisted in holy obedience, to the mind of God made known to them.

To obey God; is to do what he commands with such a disposition of heart, as he requires us to exercise. This corresponds with what Solomon says, * *Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man.* That, only is obedience to God, which proceeds from a sincere or holy temper of heart. Accordingly God says to Israel || *Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice, INDEED, & keep my covenant then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me.* No covenant at this time, existed between God and the Israelites, but the Abrahamic covenant. They are, however, required to obey God's voice, & keep his covenant. It was that covenant, therefore, they were to keep, INDEED;—in holy obedience

¶ *1st Chron. 28. 9. ** Psal. 25. 21. *Ecle. 12. 13. || Exod. 19. 5.*

ence. To the Israelites says Moses ; † Behold I set before you this day a blessing, & a curse : a blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day ; & a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God. Moses says to them again, † And now, O Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy HEART & with ALL thy SOUL, to keep the commandments of the LORD, & his statutes, which I command thee this day Again §. Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, & serve him. Of his ancient covenant people, God required holy obedience, &, therefore says, concerning them, ¶. Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.

A summary view of the religion enjoined, by God, on the Israelites under the Old Testament dispensation, has now been taken. By scripture declarations, and precepts, which have been adduced ; there is full, and positive evidence sufficient to convince any candid mind, that it was an holy religion : A Religion, which consisted in disinterested love—in repentance, and faith in holy obedience to the revealed mind of God. For the existence of all which, a foundation was laid in spiritual circumcision, or regeneration. Of Abraham's seed, God, therefore, required the same character as was the character of Abraham when God called him out of Ur of the Chaldees. For the design of God in calling him evidently was, to support the true religion. And in the practice of this religion, & on no other consideration, the tribes of Israel were to enjoy promised blessings, As will be shewn in its proper place.

We now proceede, as was proposed. II
 †. Deut. 11. 26. 27. 28. † Deut. 10. 12. 13.
 § Deut. 6. 13 ¶ Exod. 19. 6.

II. To bring into view some of the privileges & blessings which were promised, by God, to the Israelites.

SOME of the leading, and more important promises, only, will be mentioned, these, however, in their consequences, will involve others.

I. GOD promises to be a God to Abraham, & his seed.

THESE are the words of promise to Abraham *. And I will establish my covenant between me & thee & thy seed after thee, in ten generations ; to be a God to thee, & thy seed after thee. Concerning the seed of Abraham, God says, || I will be their God. When He is speaking of Israel, this expression frequently occurs, : I am the LORD your God. See the places referred to in the margin. † This promise, in which God makes over himself, to his people, in the infinite fulness, & sufficiency of his perfections, is the most wonderful, sweet, and extensive promise, the Bible contain. It is the soul and life of all the promises of the covenant of grace. If this be expunged, all other Bible promises would be of small consideration. It involves in it all the spiritual good, which God's people ever have, do now, or ever will enjoy ; in time, & thro' eternity.

2. To the Israelites God promised his presence.

IN the scriptures, there is a three-fold presence of God mentioned. In the first place his immensity, or omnipresence. This is an essential perfection of the Deity. And in regard to this divine attribute, God is equally present in heaven, earth and hell. His existence is universal.

*: Gen. 17. 7. || Lev. 26. 12. † Lev. 11. 44. 5.
30. 23. 30 20

versal and operative thro' all creation. - But it is not recollect'd, that this presence of God, is an object of Bible promise, in any instance.

ANOTHER kind of divine presence, frequently mentioned in the scriptures, is the miraculous manner in which the God of Israel manifested himself to them in the wilderness, in a pillar of cloud, and fire, which directed all their movements in their journey. This was Gods visible presence with them. It rested over the mercy seat in the tabernacle: & in the holy of holies in the temple, after it was built. But this sensible, or visible presence of God, altho' it be frequently, an object of promise to Israel, yet is by no means the main object of the promises in the Old Testament, which respect the presence of God with that people: For, after the destruction of the temple b. Nebuchadnezzar, they were never favored with that visible token of God's presence, as their own writers acknowledge. If this kind of the divine presence had been the main object of the promise, it must have run parallel with the Old Testament dispensation: Israel would always have enjoyed that sensible token of God's presence; but it was not enjoyed under the second temple.

IT is believed, therefore, the presence of God promised to the Israelites, is the same, in its excellency nature, and extent mentioned by our savior, when he says * *He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: & he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.* Judas saith unto him (not Iscariot) *Lord how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?* Jesus answered and said unto him, *If a man love me, he will*

* John 14. 21. 22. 23.

keep my words, and my father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. We have here an explanation by our Saviour of the nature of the promise. The enjoyment of God in Christ, ~~and this~~ is a fruit of the exercise of holy love; ^{this} is to enjoy the presence of God, according to the nature of the promise.

THE divine promises to the Israelites, in which they have assurance of the presence of God, are too many to be mentioned, particularly. Two however, will be noticed. One is that memorable promise made to Moses for his encouragement, and support, who, as Israel's chief ruler under God, was to bring the people out of Egypt, and conduct them thro' the wilderness. To him God saith, * *Certainly I will be with thee.* The other promise in view is that made to Joshua, who was to conduct the tribes of the Lord, into the land of Canaan. God says to him ¶ *I will not fail thee nor forsake thee.*

THAT these declarations, in which God gave assurance to the Israelites, that they should enjoy his presence, did respect the enjoyment of God in Christ, and Divine support, and supplies in, and thro' Jesus Christ, is the sense in which the Apostle understood them: For he mentions them, as a ground of comfort support and encouragement to the people of God, in all ages. † *For he hath said.* God said it to his people of old; He said it to Moses, and Joshua. *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* He says, it now. It is therefore, a gospel promise involving in it spiritual and eternal good.

3. GOD promised the seed of Abraham, that
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* Exod. 3. 12. ¶ Jeph. 1. 5. + Heb. 13. 5.

they should be his people : and he owns them as such.

WHEN God, in the covenant he made with Abraham, and his seed, assures them by promise, he would be their God, and that they should enjoy his presence ; he, at the same time, assures them, that they shall be his people. They are therefore frequently reminded of the relation, which existed between them, and God. To them God says, **Ye shall be my people.* He calls them, *my people,* || *I have seen the affliction of My People.* †*Let my PEOPLE go.* The same expression is used in the prophets, frequently. They are also called *the people of God.* ‡ &, *His people* §.

4. GOD promised them the land of Canaan, & that they shou'd take possession of that good land.

THIS is the promise to Abraham. God says, ¶ *I will give unto thee and thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan.* To the Israelites God says, * *I am the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan.* Jacob, not long before his death, repeats to Joseph, what God said to him at Luz. || *Behold I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people, and will give THIS land to thy seed after thee.* When Moses stood on Mount Pisgah viewing the land of Canaan, God says to him ; † *This is the land which I swear unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying I will give it unto thy seed.* — Joshua, after the conquest of the land of Canaan, and a short time

*Levit. 26.12. ||Exod.37. †Exod.5.1. ‡Judg. 20.2. & 2. Sam.14.13. §Exod.18. ¶Gen.17.8.
*Lev. 25. 38. ||||Gen. 48. 4. †Deut. 34. 4.

time before his death, in an assembly of the rulers of the tribes, he acknowledges the faithfulness of God in accomplishing the promises made to that people. *¶¶ Ye know in all your hearts, & in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things, which the LORD your God spake concerning you, all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof.* They had conquered, and gotten possession of the land of Canaan, and hereby there was so far an accomplishment of the divine promise.

THE seed of Abraham, it may here be observed, could not when they first entered the land of Canaan, occupy all that extensive tract of territory included in the promise ; because their numbers were, yet, too few. The original grant to Abraham is in these words, **Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt, unto the great river, the river Euphrates.* The lands included in this promise are bounded on the one side by the river of Egypt, which empties into the Mediterranean Sea, and on the other side, by Euphrates, which empties into the Persian Gulf. Between these two rivers, a country, vastly extensive, and rich, was included : and the whole, given by promise to Abraham and his seed. And they had, as Joshua observes, gotten possession according to promise. And Moses, tells the people, that in due time, they should occupy the whole. *¶ Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread, shall be yours, from the wilderness, and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea, shall your coast be.* This promise, in the full extent, it is believed, remains, under God's holy and wise providence, yet, to be accomplished.

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*¶¶ Jos. 23. 14. *Gen. 15. 18. ¶ Deut. 11. 24.*

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3. God promised when they shall have taken possession of the land of Canaan, that they should enjoy great happiness, peace, and prosperity.

GOD promised Abraham, †*That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed, as the Stars of heaven, and as the sand which is on the sea-shore, and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies.* Their outward glory and prosperity was to be exceedingly great. ‡*Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field: Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.* This representation of their prosperity concludes with these words, *The LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail, and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath.* But in order to the enjoyment of so much prosperity, it is necessary they should have peace. It is therefore promised, **And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid.* But if their enemies should at any time disturb their peace, they are assured, ||*The LORD shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way and flee before the seven ways.* The Israelites were to have a character, the most renowned, and honorable of any nation on the face of the earth. †*And to make thee high above all nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honor.*

AT the three great annual feasts, all the males were required to attend at Jerusalem. ‡‡At this

†Gen. 22. 17. ‡Deut. 28. 3. to 14. read the whole passage. *Lev. 26. 6. ||Deut. 28. 7. ‡Deut. 26. 19. ‡‡Exod. 23. 15, 16, 17.

this season their families, and property would be exposed to captivity and plunder. But see how safe, and happy they were under the guardianship of their God. §*Neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the LORD thy God, thrice in the year.*—

Nor is it found, that the history of the nation gives one instance, in which the enemies of Israel captivated their wives, and children, or plundered the country, when the men were gone to attend on God, in his instituted worship.

6. To what has been observed it may be added, the children of Israel had assurance by divine promise, that the privileges and blessings which they should enjoy, should be permanent.

THAT the promises made to Abraham, and his seed, in the covenant God established with them, should operate thro' a long period of time: and that the enjoyment of promised blessings should be permanent, they have assurances by these words. **And I will establish my covenant between me, and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations for an EVERLASTING covenant, to be a God unto thee, and thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an EVERLASTING possession, and I WILL BE THEIR GOD.* Again God says to Abraham, ¶*For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed FOREVER.* When Aaron made the golden calf, God threatened to destroy the whole nation, but Moses intercedes for Israel, and grounds his intercession upon this divine prom-

ise. †Remember Abraham, Isaac and Israel thy servanis, to whom thou swearest by thine own self and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of, will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it FOREVER. By these promises the God of Israel gave them assurance, that they should possess the land of Canaan, and enjoy what he had promised, one generation after another FOREVER, to the end of time.— And as the land of Canaan was a type of Heaven; and the promises of temporal happiness, and prosperity, have, frequently, a spiritual meaning, the terms, EVERLASTING, and FOREVER, are, in this view, to be understood, to mean in a proper sense, ETERNITY: or a period which is interminable.

If what has been observed upon the subject before us, and the writings of Moses, and the prophets, be carefully and candidly examined, sufficient evidence, it is believed, will be found, to convince every mind; that a religion pure, or holy, was required of the Israelites; and the promises respected not only temporal prosperity; but spiritual; and this especially. And if they had kept covenant with God, what David says, would have been verified * All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth, unto such as keep his covenant, and his testimonies. The promise God made to them would have been fully and exactly accomplished: they would have enjoyed all the temporal and spiritual good, and prosperity contained in the promises made to Abraham and his seed.

† Exod. 32. 13: *Psal. 25. 10.

A Careful Enquiry &c.

Discourse II.

Gen. XVII 1. *WALK before me and be thou perfect.*

Rom. XI. 20. *WELL; because of unbelief they were broken off.*

IN attending to the subject before us, it was proved, beyond any reasonable doubt by plain scripture testimony brought to view, under the first head of discourse that God required moral virtue of the Israelites, or a religion, pure, and holy ; a religion which consisted in a conformity to God's moral perfections. It was a religion which consisted in love to God, and their neighbour, in repentance and faith—in uprightness, or sincerity of heart, and in holy obedience. A foundation for which was laid in *Spiritual circumcision, or regeneration.* This is the religion taught by Moses, and the prophets. This is the religion enjoined on the children of Israel, by the command and authority of JEHOVAH.

UNDER the second head of discourse ; some of the great and precious promises made, by the God of Israel, to them, have been particularly mentioned.

In further prosecuting our subject, the bish-

ness now befor us will be to recapitulate the promises God made to his ancient covenant people : and examine the grounds on which he taught them to expect a fulfilment of his promises to them.

ACCORDING to the plan of our discourse it was to be shewn,

III. THE Israelites living in practice of the religion God required of them was the ONLY, condition of their enjoying promised privileges, and blessings.

As the writer, in examining into the nature of the religion taught in the Old Testament, & enjoined on the church of God under that dispensation, has aimed to make the bible his only rule, by which he has formed his opinion : so he designs to make this *sure word*; his only guide, in attending to what is now in view. And it is believed, that sufficient evidence will appear, from the Old Testament, principally to conviance the candid, that the children of Israel had no reason to expect an accomplishment of divine promises, respecting either temporal or spiritual blessings, unless they lived in holy obedience to the divine precepts. The accomplishment of the promises depended on their supporting character, really holy, or living in the practice of moral virtue.

I. GOD promised to be a God to Abraham and his seed ; an accomplishment of this promise depended, solely, in the holiness of their character.

ABRAHAM, who is famous in both Testaments, is renowned for his piety, his ready obedience, and especially for his FAITH. For this grace he was eminent, and, therefore, it was that God called him from his country, and his fathers house : entered into covenant with him

Him, and made promises to him of temporal, & spiritual blessings. It is not consonant with the infinite purity of the divine character to take into covenant with himself one who is an enemy to him ; and while sustaining such a character, make this promise to him, *I will be a God to thee.* This promise, however God made to Abraham ; and it is an evidence of his piety, or that he was a believer. This is the light, in which the whole transaction is viewed by St. Paul, * *Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.* But was he a believer before God entered into covenant with him, or not until afterwards ? The apostle answers this question || *How was it (faith) reckoned ? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision ? not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.* It hence appears, that God established, or made a covenant with Abraham, because he was a believer. And being in covenant with God, he directed him to put the seal of the covenant on his flesh, viz. circumcision. This was then, and it was to be for many generations, a seal of the covenant of grace, in which Abraham now stood. Agreeably to this the apostle says † *He received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised.*

By these observations it is plain, and easy to be seen, that the command then was, believe & be circumcised,—this was the will of God and the manner in which he proceeded, in this important transaction ; which was to be a precedent, in all future ages of the church. It was then, believe and be circumcised, just as it now is, believe and be baptized, Faith was then

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* Gal. 3. 6. || Rom. 4. 10. † Rom. 4. 11.

as necessary a qualification for circumcision, as it is now for baptism.

THE observations here made are to apply, to the person only who is circumcised. Faith in the subject was a necessary qualification : otherwise the seal of the covenant was set to a blank.

BUT it is now further observed : in the Abrahamic covenant, not only, is Abraham included, but also his seed. The words are * *And I will establish my covenant with thee, and thy seed after thee, IN THEIR GENERATIONS*. Hence it appears, that the covenant included both *him* and *them* in regard both to duties, and privileges. The duties enjoined being performed ; the blessings to be enjoyed were secured by promise. Circumcision, therefore, is enjoined on Abraham and his seed, in consideration of the same character existing in *them*, which Abraham had when God called, and entered, into covenant with him. To suppose a consideration of the character sustained by Abraham, when God called, and entered into covenant with him is wholly out of view, and no regard paid to it, when his seed are mentioned, is a supposition, totally, without scripture warrant. For it appears on the face of the whole transaction between God and Abraham, in the Abrahamic covenant, that as was Abraham's character, such he required the character of his seed to be. And what he required of *him* he required of *them* : and what he promised to *him*, he promised to *them*. These observations will apply, in regard both to the religion enjoined, and the promises made. When God, therefore, required Abraham to be circumcised, and that all the male children of his seed should be circumcised, the command to

circumcise

* Gen. 17. 7.

circumcise, is evidently, connected with religion : it supposed the existence of moral virtue, or an holy character, such as Abraham had before God called him, and at the time he entered into covenant with him. God it is true, required them all to circumcise their children, for he required them all to be HOLY. In other words, he required them to keep covenant with himself, and then receive circumcision themselves ; and then dedicate their infant seed to God, and then have the sign of the covenant, which was circumcision, put on them, which was a seal of the righteousness of faith.

By the preceding observations it is easily seen, that faith, the same kind of faith which Abraham had, when it is said, he *believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness,* was required of all the children of Israel, when they dedicated their infant seed to God, in circumcision. Nor had they any right to have their children circumcised, unless they were in covenant with God. If they were, their faith is such as Abraham had, give them a right both for themselves, and their infant seed. If the parent were a believer, his infant seed had a right to the seal of the covenant, but not otherwise.

THAT God promised to be a God to Abraham, and his seed, solely, in a view of their personal, holy obedience, in a conformity to this command, *Walk before me and be thou perfect,* will now be particularly attended to. To the tribes of Israel, God saith, * *If ye walk in my statute, and keep my commandments, and do them — I will walk among you, and I WILL BE your GOD. I am the Lord your God. Keep my commandments,*

* Read Lev. 26. 3. to 13.

commandments, and then I will be your God. It is said again. ¶ That ye may remember and do all my commandments. and be holy unto your God I am the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land Egypt, to be your God ; I am the LORD your God. The command is, Be ye holy, and then the promise is, I am the Lord your God.

BUT this is the language of God to Israel, not only by Moses, but also by the prophets. God says to them by Jeremiah. † But this thing I commanded, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, This depended on that. Again ‡. Obey my voice, and do them, according to all that I command you, so shall ye be my people, and I will be your God. By another prophet God says to them §. I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and keep my judgments and do them. The promise is then annexed: AND I WILL BE YOUR GOD,

IT hence appears, that the only condition proposed to the Israelites, in consideration of which, God would be their God, was, their living in the practice of moral virtue ; and supporting a character really holy.

PARTICULAR attention has been paid, to the promise now under consideration, because, by the precepts, and directions given by God, in the covenant transaction with Abraham, we learn, that it is the duty of man, in a solemn covenant transaction, to give up, and dedicate himself to God, and his service, in a public manner. And from the same source we learn, that it is the duty of parents, who are believers and therefore in covenant with God, to give up or dedicate their children to him, and have

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¶ Num. 15. 40. 41. † Jer. 7. 23. ‡ Jer. 11.
4. § Ez. k. 36. 27. 28.

the token or seal of the covenant put on them. No particular directions were given, previous to the existence of the Abrahamic covenant, respecting these things : but in *that* God established a rule, by which the conduct of his church in all ages should be regulated. There the duty of believing parents ; is pointed out, both in regard to themselves, and their infant seed ; which was to be a standing, and universal rule in his church, so long as God had a church in this world. In this way, God designed to preserve in his church, in every age, and dispensation, that same religion, in kind, by which the character of Abraham was formed, before God directed him to leave his *country, and his fathers house* : and which qualified him to be a subject of the seal of the covenant.

2. To the Israelites God promised his presence but it was to be enjoyed by them, on the condition, solely that they lived in the practice of moral virtue, and supported a character really holy.

PROMISES, of the enjoyment of the presence of God, are predicated upon the existence of real holiness, in the character of those to whom they are made. God says to Joshua ; * *I will never fail thee, nor forsake thee.* The condition is then stated : *Only be thou strong, & very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to ALL the law which Moses my servant commanded thee.* The solemn charge king David addresseth to Solomon, is in these instructive words ¶. *And thou Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind : for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts ; if thou seek*

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* *Josb. i. 5. 7. ¶. i. Chron. 28. 9.*

him he will be found of thee ; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever. The prophet says †. Hear ye me Asa, and all Judah, and Benjamin, The LORD is with you, while ye be with him ; and if ye seek him he will be found of you but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you. The presence of God is here promised upon their seeking God, and serving him with a perfect heart and a willing mind. Contrary to this God tells Moses, ‡ This people will rise up, and go a whoring after the Gods of the strangers of the land whither they go to be amongst them, and will forsake me, and break my covenant which I have made with them. Then my anger shall be kindled against them in that day, I will forsake them and I will hide my face from them. God threatens to Hide his face from them, if they went off to idolatry which event is here predicted. By the prophet God addressed the people in this manner §. your iniquities have separated between you, and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. Sin would separate them from their God, but if they were an holy people they would enjoy his presence.

3. God promised to take the seed of Abraham for his people, and continue them to be his people, solely, on the condition, that they lived in holy obedience, and served him with a perfect heart.

THE condition of their being the people of God, is thus stated. * If ye walk in my statute, and keeps my commandments, and do them—ye shall be MY PEOPLE. † Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant, and mercy with them that love him, and keep his commandments.

AND

†. 2. Chron. 15. 2. ‡ Deut. 31. 16. 17. 18.
§. Isai. 59. 2.* Lev. 26. 3. and 12. † Deut. 7. 9.

AND as God promised to take them for his people, if they were obedient, so he promised, on the same consideration, to continue them to be his people. ¶ *The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, and walk in his ways. & all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the LORD.*

BUT if they did not sustain an holy character, they were threatened, with the most distressing calamities. One judgement should follow another, until †. Their land should be desolate and their cities waste. The destruction which God threatened to bring on them for their wickedness is compared with the destruction of Sodom, and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim. §. It is supposed enquiry will be made ; wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this land. The answer is *They have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers.* But is there evidence they have broken covenant with God ? There is : *For they went and served other Gods and worshipped them.* This is the reason. The anger of the LORD was kindled against their land, to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book. And the LORD rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation. This idolatry, procured all these dreadful judgements : *They went & served other Gods.*

THE same representation of the case is made by all the prophets. The instances are too many, to be particularized, in which the wickedness of the Israelites, is expressly mentioned as the sole reason God rejected them. One or two

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¶. Deut. 28. 9. 10. †. Lev. 26. 33. §. Deut 29. 23. to 28.

only, will be here noticed. This is one. * *Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers, did not the LORD, he against whom we have sinned? for they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient unto his laws, therefore he hath poured upon them the fury of his anger.* On account of the spiritual whoredom of Israel God says, || *I will no more have mercy on the house of Israel, but I will utterly take them away.*

THUS it is seen, that Moses in the infancy of their nation, taught the Israelites, that if they continued to love, and serve the LORD, he would be their God, and they would continue to be his people; but if they forsook God, and his service, he would cast them off—His being their God depended, wholly, upon their living in the practice of moral virtue, and supporting a character really holy. The same is taught them by the prophets.

When we look into the New Testament, we find, that moral evil,—their abounding wickedness, is the reason they were disowned, and rejected by God. This will be more particularly attended to in another place. What St Paul says in the text will now, only, be mentioned. *Well, because of UNBELIEF they were broken off.*

4. To the Israelites God promised the land of Canaan, and that they should take possession of it, and dwell in it, solely on condition of their having a character really holy, and living in the practice of moral virtue.

WHEN God made this promise to Abraham, † *I will give unto thee, and thy seed after thee—all the land of Canaan,* the condition is stated in these words, *Walk before me, and be thou perfect.*

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* *Isai. 42. 24. 25. || Hos. 1. 6. † Gen. 17. 8.*

Be an holy people, be obedient to me : love & serve me. Accordingly we find Moses addressing the tribes of Israel in these words ; * Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes, and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do them, that thou mayest live, and go in, and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers giveth you, ye shall not add unto the words which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you. To the same effect are these words ¶ Therefore shall ye keep all the commandments which I command you this day, that ye may be strong, and go in and possess the land, whether ye go to possess it ; and that ye may prolong your days in the land, which the LORD sware unto your fathers to give it unto them, and to their seed. This text is also in point. † Thou shalt keep therefore, his statutes, & his commandments which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and thy children after thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days upon the earth, which the LORD thy God giveth thee forever. By these divine declarations it is seen, that the tribes of Israel were to take possession of, and dwell in the land of Canaan, if they were an holy, and obedient people. All depended on that.

Of this we may obtain further evidence, if it be needed, if attention be paid to the reason, those were doomed to fall in the wilderness, who were twenty years old and upwards, when they came out of Egypt, except Caleb, and Joshua. God says, ‡ Your carcases shall fall in the wilderness. This sentence is predicated upon their

* Deut. 4. 1. 2. ¶ Deut. 11. 8. 9. † Deut. 4. 40.
‡ Num. 14. 32. To which the reader is requested to attend.

wickedness. *Ye have tempted me ten times.---Ye have murmured against me.* The malignity of their conduct consisted in a distrust of the power, and goodness, and faithfulness of the God of Israel. Hence the apostle calls it § *UNBELIEF*, and to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not. So we see they could not enter because of *UNBELIEF*. The apostle Jude mentioning the same event ascribes it to the same cause. * *The LORD having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterwards destroyed them that believed not.* To the unbelief of the Israelites, the unerring pen of inspiration assigns the reason they were rejected from the land of Canaan. ¶ *Well, because of unbelief they were broken off.* They had not that character, which God required, and therefore he sent those evils he had threatened. He rejected them : he dispossessed them, for their wickedness—their unbelief.

5. THE great prosperity, and happiness, which God promised the Israelites, was to be enjoyed, only, on condition they were an holy people.

PROMISES of great prosperity, and happiness were made to Abraham, and his seed, of which mention has been made. † These promises are predicated upon their living in the practice of moral virtue : and judgements, and calamities, very great indeed, are threatened, if they were destitute of it. ‡ Moses addressing the same people says, ¶ *behold I set before you this day a blessing, and a curse, a blessing if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God. And a curse if ye will not obey the commandments of the*

LORD

§ *Heb. 3. 17. 18. 19.* * *Jude. v. 5.* ¶ *Text, page 31. † Deut. 28, throughout. ‡ Deut. 11, 26, 27, 28. and chap. 4. 6 to 11.*

LORD your God. Solomon in his prayer at the dedication of the temple, supposes that Israel would sin against God and then judgments, and calamities, exceedingly distressing, would take place, to correct them for their wickedness. In a view of these things his prayer is ¶ *What prayer or supplication soever, be made by any man or by all thy people Israel.* --- Then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do. Solomon pleads for mercy for them if they should repent, and pray. And this is the language of God to Israel by his prophets. ¶ *If ye be willing, and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land. But if ye refuse, and rebel, ye shall be devoured by the sword for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.* The instances in which God, by his prophets, calls the people to repentance, & an holy life as the only way to peace, and prosperity, are too many to be cited, particularly. Such exhortations, and directions are dispersed thro' all their writings. But one or two instances may be produced. God by the prophet Jeremiah says, * *O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved,* Saved from threatened judgments, as is plain from the connection. Another instance is the following. ¶ *For thus saith the LORD to the house of Israel, seek ye me, and ye shall live.* If the sins of Israel did not prevent the manifestation of divine goodness, they have assurances that they should be the most renowned, and honourable, and happy people in the whole world. The expressions are strong. † *And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his PECULIAR PEOPLE as he hath promised thee, and that thou should keep all his commandments.* And to make thee

¶ 1. King. 8. 33. to 40. ¶ Isai 1. 19. 20. * Jer. 4. 14. ¶ Amos 5. 4. † Deut. 26. 18. 19.

thee high above all nations which he hath made, in praise and in name, and in honor : and that thou mightest be an holy people, unto the Lord thy God, as he hath spoken. By these scripture declarations it is easily seen, that the nation of Israel, had no reason to expect they should be prosperous, and happy, unless they were obedient, and holy they should be prosperous and happy.

6. If the seed of Abraham supported the character of an holy people, God assures them that their prosperity, and happiness should be permanent, and they, and theirs, should, for a long time, enjoy the land of Canaan, and all the blessings, and privileges, temporal, and spiritual, which were promised.

If one generation after another, they supported an holy character, God assured them that they should [†] Dwell in the land in safety. § They should inherit it forever. Again. ¶ You shall walk in all the ways which the LORD your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you, and that ye may prolong your days, in the land which ye shall possess. They must live in the practice of moral virtue.

* For it is not a vain thing for you : because it is your life : and through this thing ye shall prolong your days in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it. God said to Abraham. ¶ For all the land which thou seeft, to thee will I give it and to thy seed FOREVER. By Jeremiah God calleth the people to repentance, and connects this promise with their repentance ; † Then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever.

THE

[†]Lev.25.18. §Exod.32.13. ¶Deut. 5. 33.

*Deut. 32.47. ¶ Gen. 13. 15. †Jer. 7. 7.

THE covenant God made with Abraham, it is clear, was to operate thro' a long period : thro' time, in the enjoyment of temporal and spiritual blessings, and privileges, which God promised to him and his seed : and thro' eternity in its glorious fruits, and consequences. Hence it is with propriety called an *EVERLASTING covenant.*‡ But the enjoyment of what was promised depended on their being an holy people ; and living in the practice of holiness. But if they did not live in the practice of moral virtue, destruction would come upon them. § *If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat the good of the land. But if ye refuse, and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword ; for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.* It they were an obedient, and holy people, they should enjoy all that God promised them, by Moses, and the prophets ; the glory and splendour of the nation of Israel should excel all others, **FOREVER.** But their sin, and disobedience would be their ruin, in time, and eternity. As is evident from what is said in *Lev.* 26. 14 to the end of the chapter. *Deut.* 28. 15. to the end. *Luk.* 13. 3. 5.. *Mat.* 21. 33. to 45.

BY observations which have been made, in the preceding pages, and scripture precepts, & promises, and declarations, which have been brought into view ; evidence, it is believed, clear, full, and explicit, has been laid before the mind, from which it *must* be concluded, that the accomplishment of the promises, which God made to Abraham, and his seed, depended, solely upon the existence of religion among them : a religion pure, and holy : a religion which consisted in a conformity to God's moral character. A religion of this kind was required

‡*Gen.* 17. 7. 8. §*Isai.* 1. 19. 20.

red, in order, not only that God might be their God, but it was also rendered, by the divine requirements, absolutely necessary, in order to their entering the land of Canaan, and enjoying the blessings, and privileges which God promised.

IN a few instances, the sense of some texts has been attempted to be given by the writer: but, generally, his aim has been, only, to collect, and arrange, under distinct heads, and branches, those divine declarations which lie scattered thro' all the writings of Moses, and the Prophets: and he leaves the Bible to speak for itself, without comment, or exposition of his own. The reader, then, when he reads, should feel that he is reading God's declarations, and not opinions of human invention.

IN attending to the subject before us, it has been shown, that the religion God enjoined on the Israelites, was an holy religion—the practice of moral virtue.—That he made promises to them, exceedingly great, and precious.—& it has been proved by God's own declarations, that the accomplishment of his promises, depended solely, upon their supporting a character really holy. The truth of this appears by divine promises, and threatenings, by divine commands, and exhortations.

THE subject being discussed by way of doctrine, it will now be further attended to in the

APPLICATION.

I. FROM our subject it is evident, that God has enjoined on man, since the fall, no religion, but that which is called the *Christian Religion*.

BETWEEN the religion taught in the Old, and New Testament, there is a perfect harmony

ny : vee a complete sameness. The same moral virtue, which God enjoined on man by Moses, and the Prophets, in the Old Testament ; is enjoined by Jesus Christ, and his Apostles, in the New. When we compare the two Testaments together, and observe what is said in both of them, respecting a real change of heart, in regard to the nature, and cause, and consequences of it ; and when we attend to what is said in both Testaments respecting love to God, and our neighbour, repentance, faith, and obedience to God, we find a perfect agreement.— Regeneration, or a real change of heart is as necessary to practice, to the divine approbation, and acceptance, those duties which God enjoined in the Old Testament, be they what they may ; as it is to practice the duties enjoined in the New. Nor could love, repentance, faith, and holy obedience exist among human kind, under the Old Testament dispensation, any more than it can under the New, if the heart be not renewed by the grace of God. And this change was as necessary, under the Old Testament dispensation, in order to form such a character, as the holy God approves, as it is under the New.

THE New Testament, it is acknowledged; contains a more clear, and explicit revelation of the nature of moral virtue, and christian exercises, than the Old. But this, it is judged, is no evidence that the two Testaments teach two religions, essentially different from each other ; any more than the more clear, full, extensive, and glorious display of the divine character in the New Testament, than there is in the Old, is evidence, that there are two Gods.

THE religion taught, and enjoized on the Israelites is the same, which is taught, and en-
joined

joined on man at this day : God is the same, and man is the same. There never was nor will there ever be, but one way in which God will be worshipped and served, and that is *With reverence and Godly fear. If man has not the fear of God, he cannot keep his commandments.||

WHAT respects positive institutions, and the ceremonial law, will be attended to in another place. What has been now observed respects the nature of that religion, which runs thro' the whole Bible, and was always binding on man, since the fall, and ever will be.

2. FROM what was observed respecting the nature of the religion enjoined on the children of Israel, we learn, that God required the same character of them, in order to possess the land of Canaan, and enjoy promised blessings ; which he required of them, or now requires, or ever will require of man, in order to the possession of the heavenly Canaan, and the enjoyment of eternal life, and happiness.

IF the promises in the word of God connect eternal life with any kind of character an human being may sustain, it is, certainly, such a character as God required of the Israelites, in every part of the old Testament. The whole is summarily contained in this command, *walk before me and be thou perfect.* It is a plain case, that but one religion is taught in the Bible : holiness of heart is enjoined in both Testaments, by the same divine authority. The promises of good, to Israel, and the threatenings of evil, are, both, predicated upon their having, or not having an holy character ; and their character was formed by obedience, or disobedience

*Heb. 12.28. || Ecc. 12.13.

dience to the divine commands, The promises, had for their object, natural, and spiritual good, to be enjoyed in this life. And they look further ; for they look forward to the world to come ; and in this view, they have for their object an eternal life, in the enjoyment of God. And all this in consideration of the same holy character. On the other hand ; the threatenings have for their object, judgments, and calamities, and a train of natural evils to be endured in this life : and they look forward to the world to come : and in this view, they have respect to eternal death :—suffering the wrath of God : and all this in consideration of the same unholy character. If, therefore, the Hebrew nation supported such a character as was required ;—an holy character, they had reason to expect the accomplishment of promises, but in no other way. If such were not their character, they had assurance from divine declarations, that evils, and calamities, the most dreadful, would pursue them until they were utterly destroyed from the land of Canaan, and deprived of promised blessings.

Is regeneration necessary in order to salvation ? Our Saviour answers the question when he says, * *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* Is love to God and our neighbour ; are repentance, and faith, obedience to God, and real holiness required in order to salvation ? it certainly is the case || *Follow peace with all men, and HOLINESS, without which no man shall see the Lord.* It is hence evident, that what God now requires of us he then required of the Israelites ; of which abundant proof has been given. And those exercises ; or such a temper of heart, or character, is now ne-

cessary to salvation, and so it was under the Old Testament. And such a temper of heart,—such a character, God required of the children of Israel, as necessary to their entering into the land of Canaan, enjoying his presence & all that happiness, and those privileges, and blessings, which lie in the divine promises. The divine promises are made, in Old Testament, & New to a character of the same kind. It is a character which God approves ; because it consists in a conformity with his own. † *Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy ; for I the Lord your God am holy.* This is the Old Testament language. The following we find in the New-Testament. ‡ *Be ye holy ; For I am holy.*

3. We learn from the Doctrine, that an observance of the Sinai covenant ; or the positive institution of the ceremonial law, was not the condition on which the children of Israel were to possess the land of Canaan, and enjoy promised privileges, and blessings.

FROM the fall of man to the close of divine revelation but one religion, is taught. That there are different external modes of administration is admitted. But that the religion revealed in one part of the Bible is essentially different from that which is revealed in another, is denied. The Old Testament, and New do not clash ; but are perfectly harmonious, in every point of view, when they speak of moral virtue or real religion. The same temper of heart—the same character is uniformly required.

UNDER the Old Testament dispensation, the administration of the covenant of grace was burdened with a great variety of ceremonies : but these did not come into the essence
of

† *Lev. 19. 2.* ‡ *1. Peter 1. 16.*

of religion; nor was an observance of them necessary, to the existence of the church of Christ. For if an observance of those various ceremonies, were essentially necessary to the existence of the church then at certain seasons the church was extinct: as will be shewn in another place.

THE gospel enjoins ceremonies: not so many, however, as were enjoined under the Old Testament. All external conduct, all we act or do with the body, is ceremony. In mental exercise, only, does the nature, and essence of real religion consist. To partake the elements made use of in the Lord's supper, is a ceremony as really as it was for an Israelite, to offer his sacrifices at the altar. Ceremonies, adjuncts, or appendages to religion there will be so long as we are in these bodies. And our doing those things, externally, is the way by which we yield obedience to God, and give visible evidence of friendship to him. This is visible fruit. Still however, whoever reads the Bible attentively will see that the heart is mainly required. The heart God regarded, in the Old Testament, as well as in the New. The word of God teaches us uniformly, in every part of it, that as the heart is, so the conduct is, good, or bad. In the sight of God, that which proceeds from a good heart is good; and that which proceeds from an evil heart, is evil. Thus our Saviour observes,* *For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. For every tree is known by his own fruit; for of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.* After using these figurative expressions, our Saviour informs us, plainly, what his meaning was, Says He, *A good man out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good: and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that*

* Luk. 6. 43. 44. 45.]

which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

HAVING made these preliminary observations, the inference now before us will be more particularly attended to.

1. By the Sinai covenant is meant those positive precepts, delivered by God to Moses, which he delivered to the people for their observance; to be continued during the pleasure of the law-giver.

By positive precepts are meant, those laws, or institutes respecting ceremonial worship, binding on the Israelites, as they are an expression of the divine mind, only and not from the nature, or intrinsic worth, or the fitness of things. But the divine will being expressed to them respecting these things, they were under indispensable obligation, religiously, to do whatever was required. No other nation, or people, but the Israelites, only were bounden by these institutes, unless they were proselytes to the religion of the Hebrew nation. When this occurred, as it frequently did, it then became their duty to observe the ceremonial law.

THE ceremonial law, or Sinai covenant, had no immediate, or necessary connection with the Abrahamic, in point of the existence of real religion. Nor was the Sinai covenant necessary to the operation and existence of the Abrahamic; for this existed, and was in operation, * *Four hundred and thirty years before that was established with the children of Israel.* Besides the religion enjoined in the Abrahamic covenant might be practiced; and the spiritual blessings promised might be enjoyed, by those who lived before the ceremonial law was enacted. If not then, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the patriarchs and prophets, and other good people, who died

* *Gal. 3. 17.*

before

before the law was given at Mount Sinai, had no religion : God was not their God ; nor did they enjoy his presence. Further.

IF the Abrahamic covenant could not exist, and operate but in connection with the ceremonial law, and an observance of its requirements even at the time the Old Testament dispensation was in being, what shall we think of Daniel, Hananiah Mishael, Azeriah, and Ezekiel ? They were men famous for religion, and a life of communion with God. But their religious character was not formed by an observance of the ceremonial law ; for they were in Babylon and could not observe the law of Moses.

BUT perhaps it may be said ; "They were in such circumstances that it was impossible for them to observe the rites of the ceremonial law, and in such cases God will dispense with it."

THE observation is undoubtedly true, & really in favor of what is now urged, viz. that an observance of the ceremonial law, is not necessary to the existence of religion ; and therefore not necessary to the existence and operation of the Abrahamic covenant, and, consequently, not necessary to the existence of the church : as will be considered in its place. God may dispense with ceremonial, but cannot with real religion : He can release moral beings from ceremonies, but cannot consistently, release them from an obligation to be holy.

To prove that an observance of the rites of the ceremonial law was not necessary to the existence of the religion enjoined in the Old Testament, and forming such a character as God required, and approved appears from God's own declarations : for he then preferred moral duties, to ritual observances. *For I desired

mercy and not sacrifice : and the knowledge of God, more than burnt-offerings. From this divine declaration it is fairly concluded, that, in order to a performance of ceremonial institutes, to the divine acceptance, it was necessary, character should be formed on the principles of moral virtue. It was, therefore, necessary there should be a compliance with the preceptive part of the Abrahamic covenant, in order to perform, to the divine acceptance, those things enjoined in the Sinai covenant.

ON the whole: If the Sinai covenant did not exist until more than four hundred years after the Abrahamic: and if there were characters formed, eminent for piety, and religion, as in the case of Daniel, and others, who were not in circumstances to observe the ceremonial law; and if God preferred moral, to ritual duties, and required that the character be formed on moral principles, in order to an acceptable performance of positive institutions: it is a plain case, that the great, and necessary thing required of the Israelites, was not an observance of the rites of the ceremonial law: that an observance of it was not necessary to the existence and operation of the Abrahamic covenant: not necessary to the existence of the true religion: and therefore not necessary to the existence of the church of Christ in this world. And from these observations it is seen, that the Israelites forfeited promised blessings, not by a neglect of ceremonial institutes, but by a violation of moral precepts.

2. SOME observations will now be made upon the nature, use, and design of the ceremonial law.

It may be here observed: The moral law is good in itself. What it commands, or forbids,

ought

ought, therefore, to be done, or avoided, for its own sake. Nothing but moral goodness is required, and nothing but moral evil is forbidden. It is a transcript of the moral perfections of God. And therefore, one who is conformed to the moral law, is conformed to God. And the more he is conformed to *that*, the more he is conformed to *HIM*.

BUT in regard to the ceremonial law it is different. This law is good, not in itself, but as it is made use of to express, or typify something beside, and beyond what the law considered in itself, contains. In its own nature, therefore, it is not binding : but obligation to obedience arises, wholly, from the authority of the law-giver : and not from the nature, and fitness of the things required. It will hence follow, that an observance of the ceremonial law, with ever so much punctuality, and zeal, and ever so long, will not alter the moral state of a person ; because he does not thereby alter his character,—an holy character will not be formed. But by the first, and lowest act of conformity to the moral law, the moral state of the person is altered ; because a new, and holy moral character is formed.

THE use, and design of the ceremonial law may be comprised under the following heads.

1. ONE design of it was to teach the Israelites the necessity of purity of life, and conversation, and holiness of heart.

To this head belong all the laws respecting diverse washings, and purifications. The directions given them respecting cleanliness in the camp during their journey in the wilderness, and in their houses, after they were settled in Canaan : and also respecting their cloaths and bodies. And many other things of this nature.

2. THE Apostle calls it **A wall of partition.*

By observing, particularly, what God enjoined on them, they were to distinguish themselves from the nations round them; and by their peculiar forms, and modes of religion be separated from the gentile world, which was then sunk into the most abominable idolatry.

3. IT was designed to typify Jesus Christ, and the salvation of sinners thro' his atonement.

THE ceremonial law is an history to the eye, of the redeemer, and the work, which he was to finish on th cross. No one thing could clearly represent the person, character, work and offices of Christ, and teach the nature of the atonement, and the way of salvation thro' him. A variety of rites and ceremonies, were therefore instituted and all centering in, and designed to prefigure Jesus Christ, and the way of salvation by him. To this may be referred all the bloody sacrifices appointed under the Old Testament ; as well as some other things. The apostle therefore says, † *The law* (the ceremonial law) *was our schoolmaster, to bring us to Christ.*

4. To preach the gospel, ¶ was the design of the whole.

THE ceremonial law is full of gospel in all parts of it. By it was shadowed forth those things, which God designed in the fullness of time, clearly and fully to manifest, without a veil, to the world. The same kind of instruction was afforded to the church then which it now enjoys : communicated, however in regard to some things, in a different mode. A mode, which infinite wisdom saw fit to adopt ; suited no doubt, to answer the divine purposes, in the best manner, in the then infant state of the church.

HAVING

.. *Eph. 2.14. † Gal. 3. 24. ¶ Heb. 4. 2.

HAVING mentioned some things respecting the nature, use and design of the ceremonial law.

3. ENQUIRY will now be made, concerning the manner of attending on the positive precepts of that law.

THE question to be attended to in this part of our subject is this. Was it necessary the Israelites should possess a character really holy, & perform the rites of the ceremonial law, in the exercise of an holy temper of heart, in order to the divine acceptance? Or could they perform, to the divine acceptance, and truly yield obedience to the divine will, in those things enjoined in the ceremonial law, under the prevalent power, and reigning dominion of a sinful temper of heart?

HE who is stiled the holy LORD God ; and the holy ONE of Israel, it is believed, requires of moral agents nothing short of real holiness. And they are bounden, by his express command, to perform whatever they do in an holy manner,—out of love to him. This it is conceived is strictly true, in regard both to ceremonial, and moral precepts, or laws. The command in both Testaments is the same. In the Old it is thus expressed, * *Ye shall be holy*. In the New thus, || *Be ye holy*. And in both God assigns the same reason ; *I am holy*.

THAT God required of the Israelites, moral virtue, or real holiness in order to their enjoying what was promised, much scripture testimony has been adduced, under the doctrine in proof. And it plain scripture declarations may be admitted in this case, in evidence ; the sentiment is established beyond controversy, or doubt

* *Lev. 11. 44. and 19. 2. & 20. 7. || 1. Pet. 1. 16.*

doubt. It is needless to repeat what has been observed. The reader may, if he pleases, look back on what has been observed under the doctrine, on this scripture sentiment.

BUT altho' the sentiment be expressed with so much precision, and clearness, it is objected to by the Baptists we will now meet the objection, fairly : and as fairly, attempt an answer : keeping our eye on the word of God, for our guide.

THE Baptists assert with a great degree of assurance, and positiveness, "That the God of Israel required of them, AN EXTERNAL OBSERVANCE OF EXTERNAL DUTIES ONLY, as the condition of their enjoying the land of Canaan, and other promised blessings. Holiness of heart, or heart religion was not required under the Old Testament, as the condition of enjoying what God promised to Abraham, and his seed ; because the church under the Old Testament dispensation was a civil, political, or national church. One kind of religion was required as the condition of enjoying the earthly Canaan, and its blessings, which consisted in an observance of modes and forms, and ceremonies, externally performed, without any regard to the disposition of the heart. This is the religion enjoined on the children of Israel in the Old Testament. But a religion pure and holy is required in order to the enjoyment of the heavenly Canaan. This is New Testament religion. The existence of the church, therefore, under the Old Testament depended on an external observance of ceremonial institutes ; but the existence of the church under the gospel depends upon a conformity to moral precepts. It is hence evident that holiness of heart was not then required but

but is now. Hence it will follow, that the church, under the Old Testament dispensation, and the New is essentially different."

THE above is a general statement of the sentiments of the Baptists, by way of objection to the arguments of Pedobaptists: It is the strong hold to which they constantly resort. Feeble however, in itself, and easily demolished, when attacked with *the sword of the spirit which is the word of God.*

IN the objection we find two kinds of religion, essentially different, and yet but one God. Two kinds of religion enjoined, and approved by the same God: and both necessary to the existence of the church of Christ; and yet, these two kinds of religion are throughout, wholly unlike each other, and totally at variance. How absurd! How unreasonable! How unscriptural! and reproachful to God! such inconsistency, pleaded in support of any cause, is evidence the cause is not supportable: is not founded on the bible.

God required of the Israelites, - an observance of external duties only, and not holiness of heart, as the condition of their being his church, and enjoying promised blessings,

THIS position of the baptists will now be attended to: and it is thought, that, if it be properly tried by the word of God, it will be found to contradict the whole tenor of the bible.

To assert that God required of his church, under the Old Testament, nothing more than the externals of religion, is, in plain terms to plead for the religion of the Pharisees. A religion reprobated by our Saviour, and they were pointedly reproved for living in the practice of it. A religion which was nothing but palpable wickedness, and the most egregious hypocrisy.

hypocrisy, and dissimulation, against them, for their hypocritical religion, the saviour denounced woes. * *Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites.* for ye make clean the out side of the cup, and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup, & platter, that the out-side of them may be clean also. In another place we read, || Now do ye pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and platter but your inward part is full of ravining and wickedness. Ye fools ! did not he that made that which is without, make that which is within also. Now it is well known, for it is evident from what we find in the New Testament, that the Pharisees were great sticklers for the externals of religion ; and the whole of their religion consisted in punctilious, and zealous observance of the ceremonial law, in all its outward rites, & forms. If then it be true, as the baptists say, that God required externals only, without regard to the temper of the heart, the reproof given to these Pharisees by our saviour, was very unsuitable, and without any just ground ; because they had, according to the baptists, and did truly live, in the practice of that religion, which God enjoined on them. When our saviour called them *hypocrites*, he greatly abused them ; for he miscalled them, and put them into an odious name, which they did not deserve.

OUR saviour reproves the Pharisees again, and says to them, † *But woe unto you Pharisees ! for ye tithe mint, and rue, and all manner of herbs and pass over judgment, and the love of God : these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other*

* Mat. 23. 25. 26. || Luk. 11. 39. 40. † Luk. 11. 42.

other undone. Here it is seen, that our Saviour prefers moral duties, to positive institutions ; and that a compliance with the latter is of no worth, in his account, if the former be neglected.

BUT the baptists, perhaps, will say, “ These texts do not apply with any force against our opinion, respecting an external performance of duties enjoined in the ceremonial law, because the gospel dispensation was now set up, the ceremonial law, was, therefore, abolished.”

IN reply to this it may be said ; He who gave the law on Mount Sinai, says that, in the last mentioned text, which is positive proof that the ceremonial law was not abolished, but was still in full force, and operation—Paying tithes was enjoined by that law ; and our Saviour is so far from blaming them for doing it, that he says it was a duty they *ought* not to leave *undone*. But he blames them for paying tithes in a wicked manner : doing it without *the love of God*. There is the blame. Further.

OUR Saviour paid tribute. * this was not paid to the Romans for the purpose of civil government ; that tax was strictly exacted by the publicans. But he paid tribute, in this instance, in obedience to a standing law of the Jewish nation. God required, || that at the age of twenty years old, when they were numbered, and enrolled, each one should pay half a shekel, this tax was imposed on them by God, to defray the expences of his worship in the tabernacle, while that was standing ; and afterwards, when the temple was built, it was appropriated to the service of the temple, and to defray the public charges of the temple worship ; which under that dispensation were very

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* *Mat.* 17. 24. &c. || *Exod.* 30. 12. &c.

considerable. Here then we see our Saviour paying his quota of the tribute appointed by God for the express purpose of supporting ceremonial worship. Would he have done this if the ceremonial law were abolished? No, we know he would not. Our Saviour paying this tribute, which was appropriated to the service of the temple, is full evidence that the temple worship was not yet abolished, but the ceremonial law was still in existence, and the Jews were all under obligation to observe all its institutions. Again,

OUR Saviour attended the festivals appointed by the ceremonial law. How, it is asked, was this consistent, if, as the Baptists say, the gospel dispensation was set up, and the ceremonial law, together, with the whole frame of the Old Testament dispensation, totally abolished? For this conduct of our Saviour it is difficult to account, on baptist principles. He certainly acted inconsistently.

IF the ceremonial law had been abolished, our Saviour would not have approved of paying tithes: and it would have been unjustifiable conduct in him, to encourage, by his presence, the continuance of a law that was abrogated and laid aside, and to pay tribute for the support of that worship was wrong.

IT is further observed. If the constitution of the Old Testament church was such, that holiness was not required of its members, and *an external performance of external duties*, was all that God required, in order to enjoy what he promised and do to his acceptance what he required: it is not seen how or in what way the same God has bound himself by promise, to accept the devout services of a pious Israelite, who paid obedience to his will in an holy manner.

ner. Can any one who reads, and believes the Bible persuade himself to think, that persons who act from sentiments of heart, so opposite, as are the dispositions of good and bad men, that they both stand on an equal footing, in reference to divine acceptance? Let the baptists, if they please answer the question. And answer it which way they will, they will find themselves perplexed with a pretty difficult dilemma. If they say the pious Israelites, who acted out of love to God, stood the fairest for acceptance with God, they must give up their notions about that wicked kind of religion they plead for, and admit that the church under the Old Testament was not a civil but an holy church. If they shall say the wicked Israelites all whose services were hypocrisy, stood fairest for acceptance, they must give up the Bible and their God.

To evince further, that the sentiments of the Baptists now under examination are unscriptural, it is observed: that the bloody sacrifices offered on God's altar, by his own appointment, were designed to typify the sufferings of Jesus Christ: The sacrament of the Lord's supper was instituted in commemoration of his sufferings. The sacrifices under the law, and the Lord's supper under the gospel, in this, meet in the same point, viz. they both center in Him. The sacrifices looked forward to a Saviour, who was to suffer; the sacrament of the Lord's supper looks back, upon a Saviour who has suffered. Baptists in general believe, that faith is necessary in order to communicate at the Lord's table, and commemorate his death. And now they are desired in a kind & friendly way, to assign a reason, if one they have, why it is more necessary

to have faith in Christ, when we are performing an action in which his death, and sufferings are commemorated : than it was when an action was performed which was designed to typify his death and sufferings. The great difference, it is confessed, is not seen. But they will say, perhaps, the difference is here, "under the gospel faith is required in order to partake of the sacramental elements, in a proper manner : But under the Old Testament, faith was not a prerequisite to offer sacrifices acceptably." Should a Baptist say thus, what the apostle asserts will be mentioned in reply.

**By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained a witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts : And this example is designed to be a pattern to others, to offer their sacrifices in faith, as he did. So saith the holy Ghost. He being dead, yet speaketh : And then the Apostle asserts, Without faith it is impossible to please God : which is true, in regard to every age, every man, and every thing we do. To say, therefore, that unbelieving Israelites offered sacrifices to God acceptably, is flattery, to contradict the inspired Apostle.*

by

To proceed in answering the main objection now under consideration, it will, for once, be admitted for truth, that the church under the old Testament, was national, or political ; and all that God required of the Israelites was, the outward performance of the rites of the ceremonial law : holiness of heart was not required. On this ground let us make this supposition ; and it is a case *supposable*, in a view of the depravity of the human nature, that all the tribes of Israel to a man had become drunk-

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**Heb. 11.4.5.6.*

ards, or whoremongers, or adulterers ; or that they had indulged themselves at times, in the most criminal scenes of debauchery, profaneness, and wickedness, and then, with the same disposition of heart, they wash their clothes, & bathe their flesh in water, and bring their sacrifices to God's altar ; and with all apparent zeal, solemnity, and punctuality, attend every rite, and ceremony of an offerer, as the law directs would God accept them ? Yes according to the sentiments of the Baptists, he must accept their worship, their services, their offerings ; for they have done all that God required. He must be their God ;—afford them his presence ; Own them for his people or church ;—must give them Canaan ;—grant them the greatest happiness that any people ever enjoyed, and the most excellent privileges and blessings ever conferred on any nation : and they must be, notwithstanding all their wickedness, **High above all nations, in praise, and in name, and in honor* ; and all this they must be, and enjoy forever.

THIS by some, may be thought to be a most extravagant representation ; but it is connected with, and will follow from the sentiments of the Baptists. For the vilest debauchee, and the most abandoned sinner in the world, can, if he be so disposed, perform, with exactness, all the externals of religion. And that, according to the Baptists is all that was required of the Israelites.

WHEN we read the prophets, it is evident that the Jews are frequently mentioned as being very exact in observing the institutes of the ceremonial law ; but all they did was *an abomination unto the Lord*. There are many such

representations. Two or three, only, will be recited. This is one. ¶ To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD. I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts, and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hands, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations, incense is an abomination unto me, the new moons, and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with, it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons, and your appointed feasts, my soul hateth; they are a trouble unto me, I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea when ye make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood. Wickedness was so prevalent among them, that God tells them, altho' they offered their sacrifices, yet, † He that killeth an ox, is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck: he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood: he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations. By another prophet is represented the constancy of the Jews in attending the rites of the ceremonial law, and God, notwithstanding, hating, and rejecting, all their service, and pretended worship. God saye, *I hate, I despise your feast-days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt offerings, and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fat beasts.

IN a view of these, and similar scripture representations,
 ¶ Isai. i. 11. to 15. † Isai. 66. 3. * Amos 5. 21. 22.

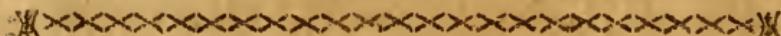
presentations, how can it be, that the Baptists, with a bible before them, can say, " That God required of the Israelites an external observance of the precepts of the ceremonial law, only, ~~as~~ the condition of their being his church. And that holiness of heart was not required." Here we see them abounding in ceremonial religion, and yet all is reprobated by God. They and their worship are odious to him. And the reason assigned, in every instance, was, the want of holiness : They had not that moral virtue,—that religion, internal and spiritual, which was absolutely necessary, to qualify them, and their services, in an observance of the Sinai covenant, for acceptance with God. The Baptists, if they are disposed, may consider this scripture declaration, || *The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination to the LORD.*

IT will be only just mentioned in this place, having brought the idea into view before, and it will naturally fall in our way in an other place. When God doomed the murmuring Israelites to die in the wilderness, the sentence was not predicated upon their neglect of the duties enjoined in the Sinai covenant ; altho' it is evident they were neglected : but their unbelief provoked God to cut them off. † When God finally rejected the Jews, that awful calamity was brought on them, not because the ceremonial law was laid aside by them, but for their UNBELIEE. * In the former instance, the ceremonial law was neglected, but that is not assigned as the reason their carcases should fall in the wilderness : in the latter instance there is no evidence it was laid aside, and the duties of it neglected ; for when our Saviour was on

earth

|| Pro. 21. 27. † Jude verse 5. § Heb. 3. 18.
29. * Text.

earth, and afterwards in the days of the apostles, the Jews were zealous for the law of Moses ; this, however did not secure them ; they were broken off. In both instances, moral evil reigning among them, is the reason God sent such heavy judgments on them.



A Careful Enquiry &c.

Discourse III.

Gen. XVII 1. *Walk before me, and be thou perfect.*

Rom. XI 20. *WELL ; Because of unbelief they were broken off.*

HAVING discussed the doctrine in some former discourses ; some inferences have been made upon the subject. As

1. God has enjoined on man, since the fall, no religion but that which is commonly called the christian religion.
2. God required of the Israelites the same character, in order to their possessing the land of Canaan, and enjoying promised blessings, which he required of them, or now requires, or ever will require of man, in order to the possession of the heavenly Canaan, and the enjoyment of eternal life.

3. An observance of the Sinai covenant, or the positive institutes of the ceremonial law, was not the condition on which they were to possess the land of Canaan, and enjoy promised privileges, and blessings.

In discussing this inference, what is meant by the ceremonial law has been, briefly, stated. The nature, use and design of it explained; and also the manner of attending upon the duties enjoined in it. Here was brought into view an objection of the baptists to the leading sentiments designed to be supported. The objection is briefly this. "God required of the Israelites, an observance of external duties, only as the condition of their being his church, possessing Canaan, and enjoying promised blessings. Holiness, therefore was not required. The church consequently, under the Old Testament and New, is, essentially, different."

To shew that such sentiments are erroneous and without scripture warrant, an attempt has been made,

IT will be rememberd that the inference now before is this. *AN observance of the institutes of the ceremonial law was not the condition on which the Israelites were to possess the land of Canaan, and enjoy promised privileges, and blessings.*

WITH a view to illustrate this idea further and at the same time exhibit evidences of the mistaken sentiments of the Baptists respecting religion, and the church under the Old Testament, it is observed.

4. A compliance with the precepts of the ceremonial law was not essentially necessary to the existence of religion, and the church under the Old Testament.

OBSERVATIONS might here be made respecting

pecting the church of Christ as it existed in the world, before the law was given on Mount Sinai, but this would protract these discourses to an undue length. It will, therefore, only be observed. That the design of God, in the call of Abraham, as has been mentioned before, was, to preserve, and continue in his church, that same religion by which his character was formed. That his character was to be a pattern, and standard, to every one of his seed in their generations, so far as he was a believer, and a friend of God. A character, which had existed, always, in the church ; and was to exist forever.

THAT Jesus Christ has had, and always will have a church, in all ages, is a given point among Christians. The promises God hath made respecting the perpetuity of the church, are sufficient evidence it shall, at no time, be extinct. Taking this for granted, our attention, without any more preliminary observations, will be turned to the proposition under our immediate consideration.

It is this. A compliance with the precepts of the ceremonial law, was not essentially necessary to the existence of religion, and the church, under the Old Testament

AT mount Sinai the ceremonial law was given. That the tribes of Israel were now under obligation to do all that God required, is admitted. But in reading their history, we find after the second year from their going out of Egypt, no mention ~~was~~ made of their keeping the passover, until they were come into the land of Canaan. For the space of about thirty-eight years, this ordinance was omitted : and so were other parts of the ceremonial law, while they were travelling in the wilderness, as appears

appears from what God says by the prophet. * *Have ye offered unto me sacrifices, and offerings in the wilderness forty years. O house of Israel.* The question is a negation ; Ye have not offered sacrifices and offerings. But were there no pious people among all the tribes of Israel ? certainly there were. Did the intermission of ceremonial duties destroy the existence of the church ? certainly not. The existence of the true religion, therefore, and of the church, is not connected, necessarily, with an observance of ceremonial institutes.

IN tracing the history of the Jews, we find under the reign of some of their wicked kings images were set up in the house of the Lord ; and the temple was shut : it was then impossible to offer sacrifices according to divine appointment. If the existence of the church depended upon keeping the ceremonial law, the consequence is, in times of such general corruption, and apostacy, the church was totally extinct.

To punish the Jews for their wickedness, they were carried to Babylon. The Babylonian captivity lasted seventy years. So long the ceremonial law was disused. So long, therefore, God had no church in this world, if, as Baptists say, the existence of the church depended upon an observance of the Sinai covenant. So long Christ was a King without subjects ; a head without a body. How absurd !

AFTER seventy years, the Jews return to Jerusalem, and rebuild it, and the Temple : They set up the worship of God according to his appointment ; and for a season were in prosperous circumstances. But after some time they fell under the power of that cruel tyrant and persecutor, Antiochus Epiphanes. He

for

* Amos, 5. 15.

for a season, put a stop to the worship of God, as instituted in the law of Moses : by his savage barbarity, and bloody persecution, he rendered it impossible for the Jews to attend their religious solemnities, and offer their sacrifices. Now it is asked, did Antiochus by this vile conduct of his, annihilate the church ? by no means. He did what he could to exterminate it, but did not, could not effect his purpose ; because its existence depended on something beside an observance of rites, and forms, and external modes of worship.

FROM these observations it is obvious, that the existence of the church under the Old Testament did not depend upon keeping the Sinai covenant ; because the duties enjoined in that covenant were not, and could not be, at times performed. But when there was an intermission of its duties, and so long as they were intermitted, the church was extinct : which cannot ever take place. No, it was an holy religion, a religion of the heart, which God required of the Israelites : a religion therefore, which an Israelite might carry with him, or practice, wherever he went. It might be practiced, to the divine acceptance, in Babylon, as well as at Jerusalem : a religion, in the practice of which, a pious Israelite might enjoy his God, and hold communion with him, whether the temple at Jerusalem were open, or shut ; or whether he had access to the altar, or not : a religion finally, which neither men nor devils can destroy. Can it be supposed, that the religion, necessary to the existence of the church, should be of such a nature, that, by the efforts of a bloody persecutor ; or the impiety of an idolatrous king, and court, the church can be annihilated, and totally exterminated ? This is too

too gross a reflection, on the power, and wisdom, and goodness, of God, to be indulged one moment. It is, however, fairly concluded from this hypothesis of the baptists : "That the existence of the church depended upon an observance of the external duties enjoined in the ceremonial law."

Is it not fairly concluded from what has been observed, that the Abrahamic covenant, ~~said~~ not the Sinai, is the charter by which the church was then incorporated ? because the propulsive part of the Abrahamic covenant enjoined a religion practicable in any place, and under any circumstances ; but the Sinai covenant enjoined a religion, which could not be practised but at the tabernacle, before the temple was built, and at the temple, after it was built. And the promissory part of the covenant, *I will be a God to thee*, might be accomplished, and that blessing of blessings enjoyed, in any place, and under any circumstances, if the precept, *Walk before me, and be thou perfect.*

BUT this will doubtless be said, by way of objection, by the Baptists : "The promises made to Abraham, and his seed, respect principally, temporal things, and outward prosperity : and this is evidence that the church was national, under the Old Testament, and that something short of real holiness, was sufficient to secure the enjoyment of what was promised, and to qualify persons for church-membership.

1. To this it is replied : It is not seen, nor do the Baptists tell us why God may not, if he please, concur, in a way of covenant, or promise, temporal blessings, upon good people, whose character is really holy, as on wicked people, whose character is totally sinful. If

there would be a degree of impropriety for God to conduct in such a manner the Baptists would gain some strength to their cause, if they would show wherein the impropriety consisted.

2. IN the infant state of the church, that the promises of outward prosperity, and great national happiness, are many, is admitted. But that these promises are an evidence that the church under the Old Testament, was an un-holy, and therefore a civil or national church, is denied. For if this be admitted, the consequence is, the church in the milieum will be only, a civil, or national church. For all who are looking forward to that glorious state of the church, expect, and fully believe, that it will enjoy temporal prosperity, and outward happiness, to a far greater degree, than ever it did before. But this idea will be adverted to in another place.

3. The promises which God made, to Israel of a spiritual nature admitting they are not so numerous yet in their kind they far exceed every thing of a temporal nature, which lies in the promises. O what a promise this is ! * *I will be a God to thee and thy seed after thee.* How much it contains ! this declaration also ¶ *I am the Lord thy God :* which frequently occurs. Now, are all the promises, which God made to the children of Israel, respecting the land of Canaan, and outward glory, prosperity and happiness, equal to one such promise ? certainly they are not. To have God for our God, is of more, infinitely more worth, than to have the universe for our portion, without an interest in the divine love and favour. It is admitted, there are promises of temporal blessings made to the Old Testament church, and they are many,

**Gen. 17. 7.* ¶ *Exod. 20. 2.*

ny, and great, but this, does not, in the least prove that church was national, and that God did not enjoin on his people a religion, holy & pure : and that a religion, of that kind was not necessary, in order to the existence of the church but it is evidence this was in fact the case. That God had respect to heart religion, in all his precepts, and in all his promises.

THERE is failure somewhere ; either the nation of Israel have not conducted as God required, or else, if they did, God has not been faithful to accomplish his promises. Blame must, and will fall on them or on God.

DIVINE threatenings denounced against that people, and promises made to them, will no doubt, be, exactly, accomplished. God denounced, very sore, and awful judgments against the Israelites, if they did not *love him, and keep his commandments, and statutes.* And he promised them great prosperity, and the enjoyment of the best blessings, and privileges, if they *loved him and kept his commandments, and statutes, and judgments.* On these observations we have enlarged, in some former pages, when we read their history, we find divine threatenings have been, executed. The Jews have been, in many instances, and they are at this time, overwhelmed with calamities, very distinguishing in their nature. The history of no nation records such amazing displays of Divine wrath as have been made against them. The divine displeasure against them is visible, to this day, where ever they are. In the calamities with which they have groaned, in one age and another, and in every country where they have lived, are seen the full and exact

act accomplishment of divine threatenings. Thus sin, and wickedness have procured all these evils.

BUT when we read the history of the bible, and compare events with the promises, it does not appear, that they have been so fully and exactly, accomplished. Their privileges, it is acknowledged, exceeded greatly, those enjoyed by any other nation, and that prosperity, at some periods was distinguishedly great. Still however, all that God promised to do for them, all the good he promised to bestow on them, has not been enjoyed. But why, it is asked, have not promises been as fully, and completely accomplished, as threatenings? Their sin and wickedness stood in the way. God could not perform his promises, and conduct consistently, because they had not obeyed his precepts. God, it is believed, will yet do that for his ancient covenant people, in which the whole world will see, as full and complete an accomplishment of the divine promises, as there has been of the divine threatenings. Of this, a view will be taken in another place.

THE baptists will object to this, perhaps, and say, "That the promises, to Abraham and his seed, have had a full accomplishment; for Joshua says * *Ye know in all your heart, and in all your souls that not one thing hath failed, of all the good things which the LORD your God spake concerning you: all are come to pass, and not one thing hath failed thereof.*"

THIS is certainly to be understood in a qualified sense, and not according to the strength and latitude of the expressions. For if we turn to the first chapter of the book of Judges, we

find

* *Jos. 23. 14.*

and that some of the seven devoted nations were not fully conquered. And after this, they frequently made head against the Israelites, and gave them much trouble. There was an accomplishment of the divine promises, but in part only : God had begun to fulfil his promises to Abraham, and his seed as he had spoken; they were delivered from Egypt, conducted thro' the wilderness, and had taken possession of Canaan as was promised. There was, therefore, an accomplishment so far, as was already done, but not a full and complete accomplishment; for many things remained, yet to be done. A few particulars will be specified.

1. THE promises to Abraham respecting the numerousness of his seed had not then, nor have they yet been fully accomplished.

God says to him, ¶ *I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth.* Again † *Look now towards heaven, and tell the stars if thou be able to number them;* and he said unto him so shall thy seed be. Another promise is the following. ‡ *I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore.* Balaam under an impress of divine power delivers many interesting prophecies concerning them, and one respecting their vast numbers. He exclaims. § *Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel.*

2. THE promises respecting the peace, and safety of Israel, appear not to have had an accomplishment, in full.

THE Israelites sometimes had peace, and sometimes war : they were sometimes victorious, but at other times, were conquered and brought under the power of their enemies. So

that it is evident they have not enjoyed the peace implied in the promises, some of which have been mentioned. This is intimated where the prophet says ¶ *O that thou (Israel) hadst hearkened to my commandments, then had thy peace been as a river, flowing on uninterruptedly, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea ; bearing down all opposition.*

3. ALL the territory included in the promises made to Abraham and his posterity, have not yet been inhabited by them.

THE promised territory extended from the river of Egypt to the river Euphrates, and therefore included a vast tract of land ; and as has been observed, all by promise given to Abraham, and his seed : which yet they have not inhabited. If as is supposed by some, most, if not all the nations inhabiting these lands, were under the dominion, and tributary to Israel, in the reign of David and Solomon ; yet this does not, it is thought, come up fully, to the import and design of the promise. Moses referring to the promise, says, * *Every place wherein the soles of your feet shall tread, shall be yours ; from the wilderness and Lebanon : from the river the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea shall your coast be.*

4. THE prosperity, and happiness enjoyed by the children of Israel, appears, at no time, to be so great as was promised.

IN the reign of Solomon, the glory, and splendor of the nation rose to its height, at no period, before or after, were the Israelites so happy or great, and famous. Yet if a comparison be made between their then happy and splendid circumstances, and the promises God made to them, it will be found, they are accomplished

complished but in part. They never have been so rich, and happy, and great as the promises imported they should be.

5. IN shewing that the promises which God made to Israel, have not had their full accomplishment, many more instances might be adduced ; only one, however will be mentioned. It is this. The time in which they were to enjoy the land of Canaan, and promised blessings, and privileges.

IT is plain by the representation made in the bible that they were to enjoy Canaan and all which God prom' sed, so long as time should last : temporal blessings in time, and spiritual, in their fruits, thro' eternity. For with Abraham God made an everlasting covenant.

THAT there has been an exact accomplishment of divine threatenings is manifest ; but not so in regard to promises : and the reason is, their wickedness prevented the display of divine goodness in an accomplishment of promises ; and it laid them open to an execution of divine threatenings.

FOR the divine conduct towards his people there were, certainly, reasons well founded. And the particular reason, the divine threatenings were executed, and promises were not accomplished, is, say the Baptists, "they neglected the duties enjoined on them in the ceremonial law : for they were to hold, and enjoy what God promised, if they were obedient to that law, but their neglect, and disobedience, would amount to a forfeiture of promised blessings."

MUCH has been said to shew, that this sentiment is not founded on scripture, and that an observance of the ceremonial law was not the condition of enjoying what God promised the children

children of Israel : but another case will now be adverted to.

IN the history of the church under the Old Testament, there are accounts of several revivals of religion. One in Samuel's time. It is said, **All the house of Israel lamented after the LORD.* So in the reign of some of the good kings of Judah ; as in the reign of Asa, and Joash, and Hezekiah, and Josiah. The same effects were then visible, which attend revivals in our day. People more generally attend the worship of God : their minds are solemnized ; their attention is awake ; So it was then, and so it is now. The public worship of God was set up, and the people went unto the temple, with their offerings, and sacrifices, in vast numbers. And as in time, of awakening in our day, some it is hoped become truly pious ; yet it is to be feared many do not ; The same, no doubt, was the case then. And as the church is now continued by those who become friendly to Christ ; so it was then. And God continued to bless the whole nation, for the sake of the pious few. What our Saviour says concerning the church was always true. *Ye are the salt of the earth.*

THERE may be a very great visible alteration in the character of a people, when there is nothing real, and internal, such kind of outward religion is so far from being acceptable to God, that their hypocrisy is highly displeasing to him. In proof of this, let us see what took place in the reign of Josiah king of Judah. He was an exceedingly good man, and very zealous in the cause of God, and religious. Manasseh his grandfather and Amon his father were idolaters. When he came to the throne

* *1. Sam. 7.2. Mat. 5.13.*

throne the religious state of the nation was in a most wretched posture. He exerts himself, strenuously, to effect a reformation ; and a very great, visible reformation was brought about. The King, and priests, the Levites, and people, all appear to go on with the greatest harmony, in the great, and good work. Concerning the passover, which was holden in the eighteenth year of Joliah's reign, it is said, ¶ *Surely there was not holden such a passover, from the days of the judges that judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah.* Yet at this very time, when the nation appeared all alive in religion, it is said, †*Notwithstanding the LORD turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations that Manosjah had provoked him withal.* And the LORD said *I will remove Judah out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and I will cast off this city Jerusalem, which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, my name shall be there.* In this representation we find there is not a connection between ceremonial religion, and the enjoyment of promised blessings. Ceremonial religion was, at this time, in a most flourishing condition : but all did not avail to turn away, or mitigate the fierce wrath of God. For under the reign of this pious king ; and when the outward forms, and ceremonies of this religion were attended in such a manner, as to exceed in external show, and appearance, any thing, which had taken place * under the judges, and all the kings of Judah and Israel ; even now God makes known his purpose of removing Judah out

¶ 2. Kings 20. 22. 23, † 2. Kings 23. 26. 27.
* 2. Kings 23. 22. 23.

out of his sight, and casting off Jerusalem.— This is a mysterious affair, wholly unaccountable is the divine conduct, if, as the Baptists say, external conduct, in keeping the ceremonial law was all that qualified them to be the church of God. But upon the sentiment which is advocated in this little treatise, the divine conduct is easily vindicated: it is seen to be perfectly consistent; for they had not heart religion: they had not that holiness God required. This idea is taken from the prophet, when speaking of what took place in the reign of Josiah, he says, ¶ *And yet for all this, her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned unto me with all her heart, but feignedly, saith the LORD.* They turned outwardly, but not inwardly, in their external conduct they turned to the LORD, but all was hypocritical, and false, and feigned. To humour their king, they went to Jerusalem, and kept the passover, but not to serve the Lord: They turned, not with the whole heart, but feignedly. What is urged here is explained by another inspired penman, in this manner; ¶ *Wherfore the LORD said, For as much as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precept of men: Therefore behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work amongst this people:— for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, & the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.* Such was their hypocrisy, that no men, or means could save them; they were destitute of that religion, which was necessary to their salvation from judgments.

THAT the church under the Old Testament,
dispensation

¶ *Jer. 3. 10. & Isai. 29. 13. 14.*

dispensation, was a civil, or national church, as is said by Baptists, and that something short of real holiness, was sufficient to secure to it the enjoyment of promised blessings, appears, by observation made under the inference to which we have now been attending, to be totally destitute of support from the word of God. And it is also evident, that an observance of the institutes of the ceremonial law, was not the condition of enjoying Canaan, and the great, and good things which were promised. One more passage of scripture, only, will be laid before the mind of the reader, under this inference. It is this. *Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good: and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? Here it is seen, that justice, and mercy, and humility, are in the view of God, preferable to the most numerous, and costly sacrifices. Thousands of rams, and ten thousands of rivers of oil, do not please God, as doth the humble, merciful, and benevolent heart.

4. FROM our subject we learn, the reason of the controversy, which, at one time, and another, God had with the children of Israel.

THE ground of controversy was, their disobedience. Not so much on account of their neglecting the duties enjoined by the ceremonial law; but especially on account of their

neglecting

*Mic. 6.6.7.8.

neglecting moral duties ; and being destitute of moral virtue, or real religion. The reason God is angry with them, is stated to be, their impenitency, and unbelief : the moral evil abounding among them. If we follow the Bible history thro', as it respects the Jews we find this to be the case.

CONCERNING that generation which came out of Egypt, as has been observed, God says, **Your carcases shall fall in the wilderness.* The reason for this sentence is, *They murmured ; and They rebelled against the LORD.* the reason assigned in the New Testament is their ||*Unbelief.* Nothing is said in their history, or in the New Testament, respecting their neglect of ceremonial institutio[n], as being the cause of their sentence, altho' it be evident they were disused. But **UNBELIEF** is the heinous crime of which they were guilty, and for which they were doomed to die in the wilderness.

WHEN we read the book of judges, we find the Israelites, frequently, in very great distress. Their enemies are let loose upon them. Some are killed, some are carried captive ; the country is plundered, and they are in subjection to those who hated them. Now if it be enquired, what is the controversy God had with his people ? The reason is stated in these words. †*They did evil in the sight of the LORD.—They forsook the God of their fathers.* And it is observable, that the particular kind of wickedness of which they were guilty, is specified. They are charged, not with a violation of the ceremonial, but the moral law. They served *Baal*, and *Astharoth*. In a word, they became idolaters. This was the reason the anger of the Lord waxed hot against Israel.

*Ex. 14.32. ||1. b. 3.19. Jud. v.5. †Jud. 2. 11.12.13.14.

THE same representation of the case is made frequently, under the reign of their kings. The observations above are clearly in point.— The anger of the LORD was kindled against his people; judgments and calamities were sent on them: the reason assigned is, they had sinned against the LORD; this is frequently mentioned.

IN regard, particularly, to the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, the reason that sore calamity was sent on the nation is stated in these words. †*And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up by times, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place: But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy.* The following text shews how they despised God's word, when they said, **As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the LORD, we will not hearken unto thee. But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her.* How they mocked, and misused the prophets, and other good people, the apostle tells us when he says, ¶*And others had trial of cruel mockings, & scourgings, yea moreover of bonds, and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in Sheep skins, and Goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented: (of whom the world was not worthy;) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens, and*

caves of the earth. By such high-handed wickedness, they filled the measure of their sin, and ripened themselves for ruin.

THE prophet Jeremiah, in his affecting elegy on the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, after giving a most lively representation of the calamitous state of the nation ; assigns the reason of the controversy God had with them. †*For the multitude of her transgressions, her children are gone into captivity before the enemy.* Again he says, †*Jerusalem hath grievously sinned : therefore is she removed.* He acknowledges, †*The LORD is righteous, for I have rebelled against his commandment.* In another place he describes, and in mournful language laments their wickedness. **For the sins of her prophets, and the iniquities of her priests that have shed the blood of the just in the midst of her.* They have wandered as blind men in the streets, they have polluted themselves with blood, so that men could not touch their garments.

WHEN we read the writings of the prophets, who lived, and prophesied under the reign of the kings of Judah, and Israel, we find they called, and directed, and exhorted kings and people, to the duty of repentance : and they urge the duty with great warmth, and engageness, as a matter of the last importance.— And it is observable, that the motives held out to their view, are, on the one hand, the certainty that judgments, and calamities, would take place, if they did not repent ; and on the other hand, judgments would certainly be averted if they did repent. The people are addressed by their prophets, so frequently, in this manner, that a recital of particulars would be to transcribe, a great part of their writings.—

Two

†*Lam. 1.5+8. 118.* **Lam. 4.13.14.*

Two passages, only, will be mentioned. The following is one. ¶ If ye be willing, and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land. But if ye refuse, and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.—This is the other. To Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. Be saved from Nebuchadnezzar, and his army, who were now meditating the destruction of Jerusalem. To prevent which the inhabitants of Jerusalem are called on, to wash their heart from wickedness.—They must repent.

To prove, that the ground of controversy subsisting between God, and the Israelites was the prevalence of sin, or moral evil, attention has been paid, to the Old Testament, only, the scriptures of the New Testament will now be examined; in which, the sentiment, it is that, will find ample support, by the divine author of our holy religion.

JESUS Christ, when among the Jews, spake many parables; in which he taught them their destruction was near, and fast approaching: and that the ground of controversy between them, and God, was their exceeding wickedness. This, and this only, is the reason he was about to send such awful judgments on them. They may be called prophetic parables, because they have reference to an event then future. A few will be mentioned. On account of their length they will not be transcribed. The reader is desired to turn to them, as referred to in the margin.

THE first we mention is the parable of the vineyard let out to husbandmen. * God is meant by the householder, he was the owner of the vineyard. By the vineyard is to be un-

I 2 understood,

¶ Isa. 1.19.20. † Jer. 4.14. * Mat. 21.33. to 41.

derstood, the children of Israel, who were his church. Much was done to render the vineyard, both convenient, and fruitful. The husbandman planted, and fenced it, made a winepress, and built a tower in it. These are designed to represent the privileges, and blessings God conferred upon his church. After all this care and pains, FRUIT might, reasonably, be expected. But those who were sent to receive the fruit, were, some of them beaten, and others killed. This has reference to the treatment given to God's prophets of old. After all this had been done, the householder sent his son : him they put to death. God sent his only begotten son, but the Jews murdered him, and rejected his gospel. The consequence was, these wicked husbandmen were destroyed, and the vineyard let out to other husbandmen. This represents the rejection of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles.

In this parable, the Jews are not blamed for omitting the duties of the ceremonial law ; and we know they were zealous for that law until their destruction by the Romans. They did not bear holy fruit, such as God required : not such fruit as was produced in the vineyard; after the Jews were cast out, and the Gentiles called in. Had the Jews produced the same fruit the Gentiles did, they still would have enjoyed the vineyard : still they would have been God's church.

THE parable of the talents, ¶ is another, by which our Saviour taught the Jews, that they would soon be called to an account ; and the abuse of the privileges they had enjoyed would turn to their destruction. The parable is closed with these solemn words. *Those mine enemies*

ties that would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.

ANOTHER parable, in which our Saviour predicted the destruction of the Jews, is that of the supper, a certain king made at the marriage of his son. * The scope of the parable is to represent the fullness & excellency of Gospel salvation, and the offer of it made to sinners. The Jews were first invited: to them the offer was first made; but they rejected it. And for this as is represented in the parable, they are rejected. The king declares they should not taste of his supper. And for their contempt of his goodness *he sent forth his armies and destroyed those murderers, and burnt up their city.* The kind of unbelief which prevailed in the wilderness, and occasioned the destruction of all the adults, who came out of Egypt; except two; is here mentioned as that for which the whole nation would be destroyed.

THIS threatening, ¶ *Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish,* altho' it has, no doubt, reference, to the destruction of the finally impenitent, in every age and nation, yet in its primary design it respects the destruction of the Jewish nation. This appears to be the case, if we attend to the occasion of this declaration: and also, by the parable immediately following, delivered by our Saviour; it is the parable of the fig-tree. The fig-tree remained barren notwithstanding all the cultivation it had: therefore cut it down. So the Jews, altho' blessed with so many, and such great privileges, were barren; therefore cut them down.

OTHER parables of the same import were spoken to the Jews, by our Saviour. But enough has been brought into view to show us,

that the reign of moral evil among them ; or the neglect of gospel duties, was the ground of the controversy God had with them. Because they did not bear good fruit, destruction was near, even at the door. This warning John Baptist gave them. † *And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the tree ; every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire.*

THUS if the Old Testament, and New were carefully, and candidly attended to, nothing is more plain, than this viz. the ground of the controversy which existed between God, and Israel, from first to last, was a neglect, not of ceremonial institutes, but moral precepts. They were destitute of moral virtue :—of real religion. Well ; because of unbelief they were broken off. This is the reason they were finally rejected. Had they lived in the practice of these moral duties enjoined on Abraham, and his seed, the calamities, which have befallen them, and under which they now groan, would not have taken place : But to this day, they would have been in possession of Canaan, and enjoying promised happiness, and privileges.

5. FROM our subject we learn that the Jewish, and Christian church are the same : or the church which existed under the Old Testament is the same which existed under the New, and the same which will exist forever.

IF the plan, infinite wisdom has seen fit to adopt, in reference to his church, be carefully examined, and understood, according to scripture representation, it opens on the mind a scheme astonishingly great and perfectly harmonious. Be the outward administrations what they may, yet a religion, of the same nature,

runs

runs thro its whole existence, in time, and eternity.

THE changes, and revolutions which sometimes take place among the nations are so great that one nation becomes totally extinct, and its name lives in the historic page only ; and another rises up and becomes famous among the nations. But the church lives one and the same in every age. Astonishing are the changes, and revolutions which have taken place in the world ; but to see the church feeble in herself, and comparatively few in numbers, live, amidst all those changes, and revolutions, and rise superior to them all, while the world has been always hating and persecuting it, it would be much more astonishing, were it not for this declaration. * *God is in the midst of her ; she shall not be moved ; God shall help her, and that right early.*

THAT the church under the New, is the church under the Old Testament, continued ; and consequently but one church ever has or ever will exist, is now to be proved. Evidence of this, it is believed, will appear, if it be considered.

I. THAT God, in the covenant he made with Abraham, required holiness of him and his seed.

FROM Adam to Abraham, there were, no doubt, pious men, in every age, but it does not appear that they were formed into religious societies, more extensive than a particular family, for the purpose of attending the public duties, and exercises of religion. But God was now about to set up a church in a particular family, which, in due time, was to increase to a nation. In that nation, the church was to exist. To

accomplish

* *Psalm 46. 5.*

accomplish the divine purpose, Abraham, a man famous for piety and holiness of life, is by the special call of God, separated from his former friends and connections, to support the true religion, such as had existed among good people, in former ages, was evidently, the design of God in calling Abraham. Accordingly we find this direction is given to him, *Walk before me, and be thou perfect*: which was to be a rule of conduct not for himself only, but also for his seed. And by this command, he & his posterity, were, in all their generations, bounden to the practice of moral virtue or real holiness. This, it is believed, has been made sufficiently evident, from the scriptures, both of the Old Testament, and New. Whoever, therefore, denies it must reject, as useless, a large portion of the bible.

2. HOLINESS always was, and always will be, the distinguished characteristic of the church.

HOLINESS, only, is that by which the church is distinguished from the world. If the members of the church, be totally destitute of holiness. There is nothing in their character by which they differ, really, from the members of any other society; so that on the supposition, there is no real difference between the church of Christ, and any other combination of men. It exists in name, only. Nothing but the name distinguishes the kingdom of Christ, from the kingdom of Satan. For the essential difference of character, among intelligent creatures consists in sin, and holiness. There are but two characters, and there are but two kingdoms in the world: the kingdom of God, and of Satan: and these essentially distinct from each other. The temper prevalent in the subjects of these two kingdoms, is essentially different; and pointedly opposed to each other. The disposi-

tion of heart prevailing among those who belong to the kingdom of Christ, is LOVE. But the disposition of heart prevailing among those who belong to satan's kingdom, is ENMITY. Concerning these the apostle says * *They are not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.* To say, therefore, as the Baptists do, "that the church under the Old Testament was unholy, and that God did not require holiness of heart as a term of church membership," is the same as saying that *that church was Satan's—his visible kingdom set up in this world by the special appointment of God.* Ornamented, however by his particular direction, with some gorgeous rites, and external ceremonies, and modes of worship to which if they attended with punctuality, God would own them for his church, grant them his presence, give them Canaan, bestow on them very great prosperity, and happiness, and far greater blessings, and better privileges, than was ever enjoyed by any other people in the world ; and all these to be enjoyed by them FOREVER ; for this is the promise to Abraham, and his seed, as has been observed: All these excellent things were theirs by the special promise of God while at the same time they belonged to the kingdom of Satan ; he had full dominion over their whole souls, & they were *led captive by him at his will.* What, then, can be more reproachful to the holy ones of Israel, than to say, his church was unholy, and God did not require holiness as a term of church-membership ? what sentiment can be advanced so pointedly contrary to the Old Testament, and New ? It is said, †*Holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, forever.* To celebrate the greatness, and holiness of Christ's

kingdom,

*Rom. 8.7. †Psal. 93. 5.

kingdom, is the design of this Psalm. For by house is meant the church. Thus the Apostle says to Timothy, **I** That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God. So again, **t** Moses was faithful in all his house. He managed the affairs of the church faithfully. The meaning of the psalmist, therefore, is, HOLINESS becomes God's church forever. HOLINESS, it hence appears, was the distinguishing characteristic of the church, under the Old Testament dispensation: so it is under the New. This will now be taken for granted: the church, therefore, is holy in time, & holy in eternity. The character of the church, it is hence evident, is ever the same; and therefore the church is the same.

3. QUALIFICATIONS for church-membership being always the same, is evidence that the church is the same.

THAT the wicked should be members of the church, under the Old Testament dispensation, was not agreeable to the mind of God. **t** But unto the wicked God saith, what hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant into thy mouth? seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee. The wicked, as such, ought not to take God's covenant into their mouth; they ought not to be members of his church. But, contrary to this, the Jews did admit the wicked, who were *anuncircumcised in heart*, as well as in flesh, to communicate at the altar, for which they are blamed. And God tells them expressly, **¶** No stranger uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh shall enter into my sanctuary. They did

¶ 1 Tim. 3. 15. **t** Heb. 3. 2. **t** Psal. 5. 16. 17.
¶ Ezek. 44. 6. 7. 8. 9.

Did admit them, and for admitting them they are blamed. But it may be said, strangers, only, are here mentioned. Very true. But what says God to them. *One law shall be to him that is home-born, and unto the stranger that sojournceth among you. Heart circumcision was required, of Israelites, and others, in order to offer their sacrifices, and communicate at God's altar.

THOSE who believe that holiness, or grace is a necessary qualification for church-membership, and practice upon the sentiment, aim to have it expressed, distinctly, in the covenant made use of, when members are admitted into the church. In the covenant transaction between God, and Israel in the plains of Moab, when they renewed covenant with God, the sentiment is clearly, and repeatedly, expressed. ¶ This day the LORD thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes, and judgments : thou shalt therefore, keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul. Thou hast avouched the LORD this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and to hearken unto his voice. And the LORD hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all his commandments : and to make thee high above all nations which he hath made, in name, and in praise, and in honor, and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the Lord thy God, as he hath spoken. Again it is written. ¶ Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God ; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers,

with

*Exod.12.49. & Lev.24.22. ¶ Deut.26.16.17.18.

9. †Deut.29.10.11.12.13. see also Josh.24.14
15 25.

With all the men of Israel. Your little ones, your wives, and thy stranger that is in thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood, unto the drawer of thy water : That thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day. That he may establish thee to-day for a people unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. When we read these passages of scripture they shew us the sense Moses, and the people had of covenanting. They felt the transaction to be solemn ; because they were now dedicating themselves to God by a covenant transaction, in a public manner. In all this business they bind themselves to live an holy life, as expressly as words can, and devote themselves, voluntarily to the service of an holy God. And this generation was remarkably religious.— More is said to their praise, and less to their dispraise, than of any other generation, from their deliverance out of Egypt, until they were destroyed by the Romans. Their pious disposition appears not only in the covenant transaction just mentioned, but also by their determined resolution to cleave to God, and continue faithful to his cause, and in his service. *God forbid that we should forsake the LORD.— Therefore will we also serve the LORD, for he is our God.— Nay, but we WILL serve the LORD.— The Lord our God WILL we serve, and his voice WILL we obey. It is also said, Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua. But, when all that generation was dead,

and

*Jub. 24.16. and 18. and 21. and 24. || Jud. 27.10.11.12.13.

and another generation arose, after them, They forsook the Lord God of their fathers, and served Baal and Ashtaroth.

GOD, by the prophet, speaks in terms of high approbation, of the piety, and religious character of that generation, which covenanted with him in the plains of Moab. *Thus saith the LORD, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness—Israel was holiness unto the Lord and the first fruits of his increase.*

By these observations, and scripture declarations is seen what character those must sustain who covenant with God, and belong to his church. Of all such, an holy character was required; and none but such had a right to take God's covenant into their mouth. They must have repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, in order to be subjects, meet for church-membership. It was not a lineal descent from Abraham, that gave them a right to a place in the church, but they must be spiritually circumcised, or regenerated. Saith St. Paul, *He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God.*

UNDER the gospel dispensation, we find the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, previously to admitting Jews or Gentiles into the church, required of them a profession of their faith. **If thou believest with all thine heart, says Philip to the Eunuch, thou mayest be baptized,* the same qualifications it hence appears, were re-

K

quisitely

**Jer. 2.23. †Rom. 2.28.29 *Act. 8. 37.*

quisite to be meet members of the church under the Old Testament, which are required under the New.

BUT the Baptists may here object and say, "God required all the Israelites to circumcise their children : and all were required to keep the passover ; and bring their offerings, and sacrifices to his altar : but there is no evidence they were all pious, and holy."

IN reply to this, it is, in the first place, granted, that God did require them to circumcise their children ; and eat the passover ; and bring their sacrifices to his altar. These things were required of all the Israelites. But

2. God required that all this should be done in the exercise of an holy temper of heart ; and if it were not so done, all they did was an abomination unto the Lord. As has been made evident, not by the writer, but by God's own declaration. ||

3. OUR sentiments concerning right, and wrong in all matters which respect religion, must be formed, not by the opinion of any man, or number of men, but by the mind of God expressed in his word. It was right for an Israelite to be circumcised, and to eat the passover, and to offer sacrifices ; but to do these things with an unsanctified heart, was not right, but totally wrong. And it was no more right if all did it, than if only one, or two did it. Some churches, at this time, practise the halfway covenant, (so called) does their uniting in that mode of practice make it right ? certainly not. Some churches believe that grace or holiness is not a necessary qualification for churchmembership, and practise accordingly.

But

|| *Isai 1.11. to 15. and Amos 21.22. and Prov. 21.27.*

But does their belief, and practice evidence, fully, that it is not? by no means. If wicked Israelites, as such, and known to be such, enjoyed the privileges of God's church, they enjoyed privileges, to which they had no claim, nor any warrant from the word of God: and those who admitted them were criminal for a breach of trust. For it was one part of the business of the priests to * *put a difference between holy, and unholy, and between clean and unclean.* For neglect of duty in this point they were reprobated. ¶ *They have put no difference between the holy, and profane neither have they shewed difference between the unclean, and the clean.* Hence the degeneracy of the church, as mentioned in the following verses to the end of the chapter. They had no warrant, from any divine command, to circumcise the child of one who was visibly unholy: they had no divine warrant, to accept an offering of such an one, and offer it on God's altar: nor had those who were visibly unholy, and unclean in a moral sense, any right to eat the passover. If persons of such a character presumed to do these things, their conduct was an abomination in the sight of God. The directions given by God to the Israelites, are the rules by which we are to form our opinion of right and wrong, in these things, and not the mode of procedure they adopted.

THE covenant made use of by the Israelites in the plains of Moab, which has been mentioned, was designed, it is conceived, to be of constant and perpetual use in that church. The people binding themselves in a manner, so solemn, and devoting themselves to God, and his service, it was supposed would be a strong barrier

rier against idolatry, and all kinds of heart wickedness. These are the expressions. [†]Left there should be among you, man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the LORD our God, to go and serve the Gods of these nations, lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood.

4. God held communion with the church under the Old Testament, so he does with the church under the New : which is evidence, that the church is the same, under both dispensations.

THE people of God, when they attend instituted ordinances, agreeably to his appointment, express their love, and evidence their friendship to Him. And when He affords them His presence, agreeably to his promise, He then manifests His gracious acceptance of them. This is the communion, or fellowship which exists between God, and his church ; and between Him, and every believer. This communion existed between God, and his church under the Old Testament. Evidence of this appears from many things said by Moses, and the prophets : but more plainly, and abundantly by what is said in the book of Psalms, and in Solomon's song. To each other, God, and the church, claim a mutual right, and prosperity. * My beloved is mine, and I am his. This agrees with what our Saviour says. || That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us. Again. ¶ In them, and thou in me that they may be perfect in one. This kind of communion always existed between God, and his church. The apostle speaking in the name of all good people

^p † Deut. 29. 18. to 28 verse. * Song. 2. 16.
¶ Job. 17. 21. and 23.

ple, says, †. *And truly our fellowship is with the father, and with his son Jesus Christ. And it always will exist, for to the church, Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to day and forever.* The church, then, is the same, in every age.

But here it may be observed : If as the Baptists say, "the church under the Old Testament was unholy," and God, notwithstanding, had communion with it; then, ‡ *Light has communion with darkness ; and Christ has concord with Satan.* And righteousness has fellowship with unrighteousness.

5. THE charter by which the church is incorporated, and holds all its privileges, and blessings, is the covenant of grace : and this is the same in every age, and therefore, is the church the same.

IF there were a covenant in existence, between God and his church, from the creation until the gospel dispensation was set up, after our Saviour's resurrection, it could not be the covenant of works, Upon man's apostacy, that covenant ceased, immediately. Being violated, it could not give life. Sinless, perfect, and persevering obedience, and not *faith*, was the condition of that covenant. But, *faith* in a mediator, if credit be given to the Bible, was the distinguishing characteristic of good people under the Old Testament, as clearly as it is under the New. This consideration is, of itself, sufficient to prove that the dispensation under which the Israelites were, was not a legal dispensation.

ON what account was Abraham so famous in his day ? It was on account of his faith. How was it the elders obtained a good report, as is mentioned by the apostle * It was by *faith*. Again.

K 3. THE

† *Job. 1. 3.* ‡ *2. Cor. 6. 14. 15.* * *Heb. 11. 29*

THE Sinai covenant cannot be the character by which the church was incorporated, and held its privileges, and blessings. If it were, then it will follow, that if at any time the ceremonial law be disused, and so long as it was, the church would be extinct, as has been observed. But this can never be. Among the thousands of Israel, Elijah thought he was the only one who had not forsaken the true God. But he tells him, ¶ *I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.* Further.

IT has been shewn, that God *Hated, Despised* and *Rejected* all the services, and worship of the Israelites, although performed with ever so much apparent exactness, if done in the exercise of a wicked, and hypocritical temper of heart. Faith in Christ therefore, was necessary in order to their acceptance with God. An observance of the ceremonial law, ever so long or with ever so much zeal, or ever so exactly, would not alter the moral state, or character of an Israelite. Besides.

IF the ceremonial law were the character of the church of Israel, and by an observance of its precepts, in external services, only, they were to hold, and enjoy promised blessings, it is not seen, how God could, consistently with his own declarations, and promises reject them from being his people when he did. For it is a clear case, from what we find in the New Testament, that, that kind of religion which consists in external forms, and modes of worship was practised, generally, by the Jews, in the times of our Saviour, and his apostles. But he says unto them by way of reproof, * *Ye pass over*

ever judgment, and the love of God. Moreover,

THE carnal ordinances, as the apostle calls the institutes of the ceremonial law, were imposed until the time of reformation || But the covenant by which the church under the Old Testament was incorporated, is an EVERLASTING COVENANT. † The Sinai covenant was temporary ; but the Abrahamic is everlasting, and is therefore, the covenant of grace. The Sinai covenant was to wax old, and vanish away, but the Abrahamic is always NEW.

WHAT has already been observed may be again noticed : viz. That God required of the Israelites in order to their enjoying promised blessings, the same kind of religion, which he required of them, or now requires of us, in order to the enjoyment of eternal life. The religion enjoined on Gods people in the Old Testament, consisted in disinterested love, in repentance, faith, and holy obedience. And in order to the existence, of exercises of this kind, spiritual circumcision, or regeneration was necessary. To these ideas particular attention has been paid. And from them it appears evident, that the covenant which was in operation under the Old Testament, was the covenant of grace : and the church under that dispensation, was incorporated by that covenant : and by it held all its privileges and blessings. If the duty be performed, the good promised would be enjoyed. It is, therefore, the same covenant, which now exists between God and his church, and by which it holds and enjoys its privileges, and blessings under the gospel ; and into which the Jews will be gathered in some

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|| Heb. 9. 10. † Gen. 17. 7. see also 2 Sam. 23. 5. 1 Chro. 16. 17. Isai. 29. 5. and Jer. 32. 40.

future period, if they bide not still in unbelief. But this will claim our particular attention in another place.

THERE it will be expedient to answer an objection to which attention will be paid in the succeeding discourse.



A Careful Enquiry &c.

Discourse IV.

Gen. XVII 1. *Walk before me, and be thou perfect.*

Rom. XI 20. *WELL; Because of unbelief - they were broken off.*

WITHOUT recapitulating the observations previously made, attention will, now, be paid to the objections hinted at, in the close of the preceding discourse.

"THE Abrahamic covenant," say the baptists, "is not the covenant of grace, nor was the church under the Old Testament incorporated by it ; for God by the prophet says, *Behold the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah : Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day

that

* Jer. 31. 31 32 33.

that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, (which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD.) But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel. After those days saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people. God, therefore, will make, with the house of Judah, and Israel, in some future time, a covenant distinct, and really different, from the Abrahamic."

To such an objection, this may be said by way of reply, mention is made in this passage of scripture, of two covenants. One is called a new covenant, the other is the covenant God made with the Israelites at mount Sinai, when he took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. But the covenant, which God says he will make with Judah, and Israel, in some future day, being called NEW, the term, to the minds of some, brings up a difficulty. "For in what sense," they ask, "can it be called a new covenant; if it was established, so long since, with Abraham, and had been in existence, and operation from that time?"

To such a query this reply may be made. It may be called a new covenant, in reference to the manner of its dispensation; being ratified by the blood, and actual sufferings of Jesus Christ; of which the bloody sacrifices, offered by the Israelites were typical. Being freed from all the many rites, and ceremonies, which were imposed on the Israelites under that dispensation, the administration of the covenant puts on externally, or visibly, quite a new form. So that

that, although the spiritual acts of worship be the same under both testaments, yet the external part of worship under the new is so different from that appointed by God under the Old; the covenant may with propriety be called NEW.

IT may be called a new covenant, although it has been in operation, so long time, under the Old Testament; because under the New there is a more full and clear manifestation, of the character, and perfections, and government of God; and of the person and character, the work, and offices of Jesus Christ, than there was under the Old Testament. That dispensation was glorious, but not so glorious as the gospel dispensation. Saith the apostle § *For even that which was made glorious, had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth.* For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious. Again,

THE gifts and graces of the holy Ghost, are bestowed, on human kind, much more copiously under the New Testament dispensation, than they were under the Old. Besides,

IT is a covenant which will never wax old, or be abolished; but the Sinai covenant is abolished and done away. It is, therefore, called a new covenant in the same sense the precept requiring LOVE, is called a *new commandment.* He who commanded the Israelites, saying, **Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart;* and, †*Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself:* and told the young man, ||*On these two commandments hang all the law, and the prophets;* does, notwithstanding, tell his disciples, ‡*A new commandment I give unto you.* Well, what is

§ 2. Cor. 3. 10. 11. * Deut. 6. 5. †. Lev. 19. 18.
||. Mat. 22. 40. ‡. Job. 13. 34.

is this new commandment? It is this, *That ye love one another.* And the apostle says, § *This is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.* The law of love, is a message we have heard from the beginning, and yet our Saviour calls it *a new commandment.* The reason is easily seen, it is a law of perpetual obligation, but under the gospel, renewed, and enforced, more clearly, and abundantly, and with some new motives, and reasons. So the Abrahamic covenant, which is the covenant of grace, although in existence, thousands of years before, may with propriety be called a *new covenant*, when it shall be received, as to the Israelites, and renewed with them, and they, again, gathered in the church of Christ, under the operation of the same covenant of grace, which had existed in all former ages.

THE passage of scripture now under consideration, looks forward to events yet to take place, and has reference, no doubt, to the millennium. By God, the Jews are now rejected : *broken off*, says the apostle, *for their unbelief.* They are not his people, nor is he their God. But this we know, by promises, and prophecies, in both Testaments, that they are to be again, His people, and He will be their God. When this shall be, God will make with them this *new covenant.* The covenant on their part and on God's part will be *renewed.* Agreeably to that solemn covenant transaction which took place between God and Israel in the plains of Moab, not long before they entered the promised land : they avouched God, to be their God, and he avouched them to be his people. As has been observed,

WHEN the Jews shall embrace the gospel,
§. 1 Job. 3. 11. by

by believing in Christ, and are again gathered into the kingdom of God, they will find themselves in a situation very different from that, in which their predecessors were for many ages while rejected of God. The ceremonial law, on account of which they valued themselves so highly, they will find, is, totally abolished : those external modes of worship, which they conceived were to last forever, wholly done away : and the distinction between Jews, and Gentiles, entirely laid aside ; the partition wall being broken down and gospel offers are made and salvation is preached indiscriminately, to all nations ; to the seed of Abraham it will be new times indeed. So that although the covenant which shall separate when they shall embrace the gospel, will be the same which had operated all the time the dispensation of the Old Testament was in existence : yet, after so long a suspension of its operation, in reference to that people, and they being again gathered into the church, under the same covenant, the administration of which under the gospel, is so different from the administration of it under the Old Testament, that it may well be called a *new covenant*. As the old commandment requiring ^{law}, which we had from the beginning is called a *new commandment* ; because of its excellency, and importance ; so the old covenant, which has existed ever since it was established with Abraham, is called a *new covenant*, because of its vigor, excellency, and importance it is new in time, and eternity. It will forever be THE NEW COVENANT.

If after the observations which has been made respecting the *new covenant*, which God says he would make with the house of Judah, and Israel, doubts remain in the mind of any, and

and it be still urged, that it is a covenant essentially different from the Abrahamic, there is one passage of scripture which we shall mention decidedly in point ; proving, as is conceived that, *that new covenant* is only a revival of the covenant, which God established with Abraham. Moses tells the Israelites that God would for their wickedness * *Make their cities waste. Bring their land into desolation.* And again, God says *I will scatter you among the heathen. And ye shall perish among the heathen, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up.* In these, and similar declarations, the present deplorable state of the Jews is plainly predicted. After stating their wickedness, and present dispersion among the nations, their repentance is supposed. *If they shall confess their iniquity. And, If their uncircumcised heart be humbled, and they shall accept the punishment of their iniquities.* When this is the case, God declares to them. *Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember ; and I will remember the land.* It is added, *And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them : for I am the LORD their God.* But the Sinai covenant is broken, is dissolved, is wholly set aside. Let us however read on, and see what God says further upon the subject. But *I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt, that I might be their God.* How exactly this expression corresponds with the promise in the Abrahamic covenant. *I will be a God to thee and thy seed after thee !*

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*. Lev. 26. 31. 32. 33. 38. *verses 40. 41.*
and verses 42. 44. 45.

THE passage of scripture to which we have now been attending determines the question respecting the *new covenant*, which God said he would make with the house of Judah, and Israel, at some future period. It is a renewal of the Abrahamic covenant, with them. For God says, he would *remember the covenant with Abraham*: and as he was in former times, *The Lord their God*. He would then be the same to them, *when they should own him for their God*, the Abrahamic covenant will then be received in regard to them, and they will, as in former times, stand in the same covenant in which they had stood, and the same covenant relation will exist between them, and their God, which had existed under the Old Testament.

FROM all which it follows, that the covenant by which the church under the Old Testament was formed; and which operated under that dispensation, is the same by which the church is now formed, and which is in operation under the gospel. The covenant, under both dispensations, being the same, is evidence that the church is the same.

6. JESUS Christ is the same to the church, under the Old, and New Testaments: this also argues the sameness of the church.

JESUS Christ was the prophet, or teacher of the church, under the Old Testament. On Mount Sinai he gave the law, both moral, and ceremonial * The prophets, under that dispensation, *spake by the spirit of Christ*. || He is also the prophet, or teacher, of the church under the New Testament. Saith the apostle, † *God hath in these last days spoken unto us by his son.*

He was the redeemer of the church, under the

* *Act. 7. 38.* || *1 Pet. 1. 11.* † *Heb. 1. 1. 2.*

the Old Testament. By the prophet God says
 ¶ *Fear not thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel ; I will help thee saith the LORD, and thy redeemer.* He is the redeemer of the gospel church. St. Paul in his farewell address to the Elders of the church at Ephesus directs them. § *Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.*

JESUS Christ was King of the church, under the former dispensation. God saith concerning him. ¶ *Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.* He is still King of the church. The apostle speaking of the dominion to which Jesus Christ is exalted by the father says, *. *. And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Speaking of himself he says thus, ||. ||. *All power is given unto me, in heaven and earth.*

He was the Husband of the church under the Old Testament. †. †. Says God. *I was an husband unto them.* And still he is the same to the church. Paul tells the church at Corinth. §§. *I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.*

EXCEEDINGLY great was the love which Jesus Christ had for the church under the Old Testament. The church says * *His desire is towards me.* Christ says concerning the church, ¶ *thou art beautiful O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem.* Turn away thine eyes from me for thou hast overcome me. In the New Testament our Saviour has acted out the love he has for his church, and given the highest possible evidence of it by dying on the cross. The a-

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‡. *Ifai. 41. 14, §. Acts. 20. 28. ¶. Psal. 2. 6. *. *. Eph. 1. 22. ||. Mat. 28. 18. †. †. Jer. 31. 32. §§. 2. Cor. 11. 2. * Song. 7. 10. || Song. 6. 4. 5.*

postle says, † Christ loved the church and gave himself for it.

By these observations, and scripture declarations, it is seen, that Jesus Christ is the same to the church, under both dispensations; the church, therefore, is the same.

7. To prove that the church is the same under the two testaments, attention will now be paid to some passages of scripture.

THE first we notice is that ancient and remarkable prophecy delivered by Noah, soon after the flood. These are his words, ‡ God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem. From Shem the Israelites among whom was the true church, were descended. The Gentiles were the posterity of Japheth. By tents is meant the church. To dwell in those tents, is to enjoy the privileges of Gods church. Shem's tents were not to be destroyed, but Japheth was to dwell in them, with him. The obvious meaning of the prophesy is; the posterity of Japheth, in some future time, shall be gathered into the church with the posterity of Shem, and with them be one church. This agrees with what the apostle observes, when speaking concerning those who had been Gentiles. § Now therefore, ye are no more strangers, and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God.

IN the Old Testament, and New, the church is called the house of God. As has been observed. The apostle making use of this metaphor, says, ¶ whose house we are. We under the New, and they under the Old Testament, are the same house. The old one is not pulled down, and a new one built,

but

† Eph. 5. 25. ‡ Gen. 9. 27. § Eph. 2. 19.
¶ Heb. 3. 2. to 6.

but the apostle's sentiment is, the same house is now standing, which was then standing.

ANOTHER passage of scripture is the following * *In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David, that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof, and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old.* In the presence of the apostles and elders, met in council at Jerusalem upon business which respected the church, James mentions this prophesy || and applies it to the calling of the Gentiles into the church. The *tabernacle of David*, by which is meant the church of Christ, is not new made but only repaired. The breaches closed up, and the ruins raised up. And it may be remarked, the church under the gospel, is built *as in the days of old*: Built on the same plan, the church was, under the Old Testament. It is therefore not a new church, but the same which had been in existence.

IN that parable, in which our Saviour calls himself the shepherd, and believers his sheep, he says, † *Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.* This has reference to the calling of the Gentiles into the church, which is here called Christ's fold. The Jewish fold is not pulled down, but the Gentiles were to be gathered into it. And *there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.* Christ's sheep among the Gentiles were to be gathered into the Jewish fold. *

OUR Saviour when he applies the parable of the householder to the purpose for which he had spoken, it says, ‡ *Therefore I say unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given*

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^{to}

* Amos 9. 11. || Act. 15. 14. to 17. † Joh. 10. 16. ‡ Mat. 21. 43.

to a nation bringing forth the fruit thereof. The kingdom of God, is a phrase, used, frequently, in the New Testament, and denotes, if not always, yet very often, the church of Christ in this world. This is the sense in which it is here used. Among the Jews was this kingdom of God: and it was not to be destroyed, but taken from them, and given to others; meaning the Gentiles. The kingdom of God, in which the Jews were, is the same into which the Gentiles will be admitted.

ATTENTION will now be paid, to what St. Paul said to the Ephesian christians. * When they were Gentiles, they were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. They were afar off from God, and the church, and salvation. Thus lamentable was their situation. But the case of the Jews was very different. One apostle observes to them, || Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers. Another observes concerning them: † To whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises. Now with this highly privileged people the Gentile converts were united, and so became one body, or church with them: for the Jews were not yet broken off. For this union a foundation was laid by the death of Christ, and an actual participation, of gospel blessings, and church privileges, was in consequence of believing on Christ. For through him, says the apostle, we both (Jews and Gentiles) have an access by one spirit unto the father.

From

*Eph. 2.12. to the end of the Chap. || Act. 3.25.

†Rom. 9.4.

From all which the apostle draws this consequence; *Now therefore ye (Gentiles) are no more strangers, and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, (the church of God among the Israelites,) and of the household of God. And are built upon the foundation of the apostles, and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. In whom all the building fitly framed together (the Old, and New Testament church united into one) groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.* By what the apostle observes in the above cited passage, his design evidently was to teach us, that the Gentiles are incorporated into the church with the Jews, and, therefore, the church under the gospel, is but a continuation of it under the Old Testament. So that it is the same in every age.

To that passage of scripture, in which the apostle, by a metaphor, calls the church, an *Olive tree* *. attention will now be paid. By *Olive-tree*, is meant the church. By that name God called it. || *The Lord called thy name a green Olive-tree, fair, and of goodly fruit. For stateliness, and beauty, and fragrancy, the church is compared to an Olive-tree. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the Olive-tree, and his smell as Lebanon.* This is spoken of the church under the Old Testament.

THE apostle makes use of the same metaphor, and tells the Gentiles to whom he wrote, that *some of the branches of that Olive-tree were broken off; and the Gentiles were grafted in am'gst their branches, which still remained, and so partook of the root and fatness of the Olive-tree, with the Jews.* The old *Olive-tree* was not plucked up by the roots, neither was

it

**Rom. xi. 11. Jer. iii. 16. Hos. 14. 6.*

It cut down, and destroyed, but some branches are broken off, and the Gentiles who are called a wild Olive-tree are grafted in, where the Jews were broken off. The unbelief of these was the reason they were broken off; and the faith of those was the reason they were grafted in. The old Olive-tree is standing, and receives an accession of branches from among the Gentiles. This proves the sameness of the church, under both dispensations.

THE apostle, after informing the Gentiles that they were incorporated into the same church, in which the Jews were; tells the Jews that *they also if they bide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in.* If a baptist, or any one else should ask the apostle into what stock they should be grafted he would answer, *Into their own Olive-tree;* not another, but the same from which they had been broken off. They will, when they embrace the gospel, be gathered into the same church, from which they are now, on account of their UNBELIEF, rejected.

FROM these scripture prophecies, and declarations, evidence appears, sufficient to convince candid minds, that the church is the same, under the Old, and New Testament dispensations. The church, which now is, is the same which always was, and will be.

8. IF the moral duties enjoined by God, on the Israelites, and the promises which He made to them, be compared with the character and state of the Jews, and the church generally, in the millenium, in regard both to holiness of life, and the enjoyment of prosperity, we shall discover a surprising sameness.

IF we carefully attend to the divine precepts, and see what character God required the Israelites

raelites to sustain ; and if we attend to the promises made to them by God, and see how great their privileges, and happiness should be, if their character corresponded with the divine precepts, and compare these with the character of the Jews, and the happiness they will enjoy ; and also what will be the character, and happiness of the whole church of God, through the world, in the millenium ; it will appear, that the God of Abraham, when he first set up a visible church in the world, adopted a plan, which he has been pursuing, uniformly, in every age ; and will pursue, until his vast designs are all accomplished, and time is swallowed up in eternity. From hence it will appear that God ever had, and ever will have, but one church, in time and eternity ; on earth, and in heaven.

I. God required the Israelites to know, and understand his revealed will : and provided means to make them a knowing, and understanding people, in spiritual, and divine things.

To this purpose is the following direction, *And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shall talk of them when thou sittest in thine house ; and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates. In things divine, what a knowing people they would have been, had they thus heedfully attended to the word of God. And they had not only Divine revelation to read, and study, but God provided for them, other assistances.

For

* Deut. 6. 6. to 9.

For one whole tribe was set apart by Him, if not wholly for the purpose of instructing the people, yet this was a part of their office work.
** The priests lips should keep knowledge and they should seek the law at his mouth ; for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts.* In the things of God, and religion, the Israelites would have been a wise and understanding people if they had well improved the advantages God gave them.

IN the millenium, knowledge will prevail, very exceedingly, among the Jews, and generally, in the church. It is said || *And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother saying, know ye the LORD ; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them.* The great degree of divine light, which in that time will be prevalent in the church, is represented by these metaphorical expressions. †. *The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be seven fold as the light of the seven days, in the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.*
 2. GOD required them to live in the exercise of benevolent affection ; or disinterested love.

LOVE to God, and their neighbor was enjoined on them. And this benevolent disposition was to be the governing sentiment of their hearts, even in the wars they might carry on. This is God's direction ‡ *When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it.* By this they were to manifest a peacable disposition. If the besieged manifested the same the city was not to be destroyed. If such

¶. Mat. 2. 7. || Jer. 31. 34. †. Isai. 30. 26.
 ‡. Deut. 20. 12. 11.

such a disposition were universally prevalent, as God in this instant, required of the Israelites, peace would soon extend her empire over all the world.

THIS, in the millenium, will be the case. **The nations shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks ; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.* Again, ¶*And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and insure dwellings, in quiet resting places.* This universal peace, among all nations, will be the fruit of that benevolent temper, which God of old required his people to exercise.

3. GOD required his people to be holy.

WALK before me and be thou perfect. An holy character was required of every individual. They were to be an holy people to the LORD ; as has been observed.

IN the millennium, HOLINESS will be prevalent. †*Thy people also shall be all righteous.* Again, ‡*In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David, and the house of David shall be as God, as the Angel of the Lord before them.* And it is said. §*All iniquity shall stop her mouth.*

4. GOD promised the Israelites great outward glory, and prosperity, such as no people ever before enjoyed : of which notice has been taken.

IN the millennium, the outward glory and prosperity of the church will be exceedingly great, so that nothing before ever equalled it. God will remarkably bless his people. ¶*They shall build houses, and inhabit them ; and they*

**Isai. 2. 4.* ¶*Isai. 32. 18.* †*Isai. 60. 21.* ‡*Zach.*

12. 8. §*Psal. 107. 42.* ¶*Isai. 65. 21.*

shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They will live in perfect safety. * * They shall sit every one under his vine, and under his fig tree, and have none to make them afraid. A remarkable blessing will attend the labor of the husbandman. ||| For the seed shall be prosperous ; the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew, and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things. So again, * And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise, and an honor before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them ; and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness, and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it.

GREAT, indeed, was the glory, and happiness, and outward prosperity of the Israelites under the reign of Solomon : it was, however, but a very faint shadow of the outward happiness, and glory, and splendor, of that nation, and the whole church, in the millennium.

IF the promises of temporal blessings, and a very great measure of outward prosperity, be an evidence, as the Baptists say it is, that the church under the Old Testament dispensation, was civil, or political ; it will hence follow that the church in the millennium will be civil or political. For, it is the case certainly, that those passages of scripture which speak of the church in its millennial state, give unequivocal evidence, that men will then be, not only eminently holy, or pious, but they will also be eminently happy, and prosperous ; and enjoy, abundantly, the blessings of divine providence, far beyond any thing, which ever had been in this world. Few are the promises God has

made

* * Micah. 4. 4. ||| Zech. 8. 12. * Jer. 33. 9. also
31. 10. to 14. and Amos 9. 13. 19. 15.

made to his church, under the gospel respecting natural good, and the enjoyment of outward prosperity, is the sentiment of some ; but by the passages of scripture mentioned above, it appears the sentiment is not correct. The line of conduct pursued by people generally, in the millennium, will have a tendency to increase their prosperity, and happiness, greatly. And great prosperity and happiness is promised.

5. God required his people to have gladness of heart, and to rejoice, abundantly.

THE joy they are called to exercise is not a carnal ; but an holy joy in God. ¶ *Thou shalt rejoice in the LORD.* Again, † *Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God.* And, ‡ *Their hearts shall rejoice in the LORD.*

THE millennium is represented as a season of very great joy, and rejoicing in the church. That happy time is thus described by the prophet. **The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads ; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow, and sighing shall flee away.* So again, ¶. *For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace, the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you with singing, and all the trees of the fields shall clap their hands.* This also may be added. † *Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.*

FROM the observations which have been made it appears, that the church which now is, is the same which existed under the Old Testament : and the same which will be in the millennium. That the same character existed in the church, under the Old Testament, which

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¶ *Isai. 41.16.* † *Isai. 2.23.* ‡ *Zach. 10.7.*

* *Isai. 35.10.* ¶ *Isai. 55.12.* † *Isai. 12.3.*

now exists, and always will, in time, and eternity. That there is a difference in character in different periods, is admitted, but the difference consists not in *kind* but *degree*. A succeeding age of the church does not assume a character really new, or essentially different from the preceding age: there is only an increase of knowledge, and holiness. There has been, is now, and always will be a continual advancement, on the whole, in the character of the church. Till as says the apostle, ‡ *We all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.* As an infant if it lives, is constantly advancing towards maturity, in manhood. To represent the increase of the church in numbers and holiness, it is by our Saviour compared to mustard-seed § and to leaven, ¶ In regard to externals, there is a great diversity in the state of the church in different periods of time, but as to *internals*, meaning hereby, that which is spiritual, holy and divine, it is the same in nature, different only in degree.

RESTING on the truth of divine revelation; we have reason to believe, that the Jews will in some future day, be, again brought into covenant with God. He will own them for his people; and they will own him for their God. * *Afterwards shall the children of Israel return and seek the LORD their God, and David their king, and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days.* By David is meant, in this text, Jesus Christ; for so he is called sundry times in the Old Testament. ||. When
they

‡ Eph. 4. 13. § Mat. 13. 31. 32. ¶ Mat. 13. 33. *. Hos. 3. 5 ||. Ezek. 34. 23. 24. and Jer. 30. 9. and 37. 24. 25.

they shall seek the *Lord*, and *David* their king, such then will be their character, that God can consistently, with his own declarations, accomplish the promises made to Abraham, and his seed, in their literal and full extent. For this, by the mercy, and grace of God, they will be prepared. And then the promises will be completely, accomplished, which God made to Abraham, and his seed.

DIVINE threatenings, have been, and now are executing on the Jews, in their full extent. The natural evils they have suffered are in consequence of the wickedness of their character. And the promises, it is believed, will also be accomplished in their full extent, when their character shall so far correspond with the divine precepts, as that God can consistently, with his truth and holiness below on them all those privileges, and blessings which lie in the promises. Some of which, it has been observed, yet remain, under the holy, and wise government of God, to be accomplished. Which will be done, when they shall *Seek the LORD their God and David their king, in the latter days.* A few of those promises will be taken notice of: before we proceed: remembering as we go along, that they are promises made to Abraham and his seed.

BEING fitted by the grace of God, and sustaining such a character as he always required of them, as will be the case in the millennium,
1. They will, it is believed, return to the land of Canaan, and possess the whole territory, agreeably, to the extent of the promise.

ALL that extensive tract of land lying between the river of *Egypt* and *Euphrates*, was by promise given to the seed of Abraham. †

Unto thy seed lays God to him, have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates. But all this territory the children of Israel never did inhabit, yet the promises, and prophecies in the Bible, do, it is conceived, give sufficient evidence, to induce us to believe they will actually, possess, and inhabit all these lands, as their fathers once did a part of them.

THAT the Jews will be brought again into the land of Canaan in due time and possess the whole country promised to Abraham, and his seed, a few passages of scripture will be brought in proof, and left without a comment, the reader may, if he please, examine their import.

WHAT Moses said will be first taken notice of. In strong terms he describes the dreadful evils, and calamities God would inflict on the Israelites for their wickedness. In many expressions, he states their present situation, as in the following words. **The LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other.* All this would come on them for their wickedness. Moses then mentions their repentance, and yielding to God that pure and holy obedience, with all their heart & soul, which he always required of them. This is so expressed as eventually to look forward to a time, & to events, yet future. ¶ *And it shall come to pass when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou & thy children, with all thine HEART, & with all*

* Deut. 28. 64. ¶ Deut. 30. 1. to 5.

all thy SOUL. Here we see that the Jews in the latter days, when they shall seek the LORD and David their king, will form their character, agreeably, to the moral rules, and precepts given by Moses, in the infant state of the church, when it was first formed. When the character of the nation, in the millennium, shall be formed agreeably to the moral rules, or precepts God gave them by Moses, the declaration is, *That then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee and will return and gather thee from all the nations whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee.* Their present dispersed state is then mentioned again : *If any of them be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven.* Then follows what God will do for them, thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee. The place to which God will bring them is then specified. **AND THE LORD THY GOD WILL BRING THEE INTO THE LAND WHICH THY FATHERS POSSESSED, AND THOU SHALT POSSESS IT.** They shall possess the land which their fathers possessed, the land of Canaan ; this is the promise. The prophet, speaking concerning the seed of Abraham, looks forward in his prophecy and says, * *In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north, to the land I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers.* The time here referred to is the millennium, when all nations shall be gathered into the church, to the name of the LORD. In another place, thus it is written || *He that scattered Israel will gather*

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* *Jer. 3. 17. 18.* || *Jer. 31. 10. 11. 12.*

him, and keep him as a shepherd doth his flock. For the LORD hath redeemed Jacob and ransomed him from the hand of him that is stronger than he. Therefore shall they come, and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the LORD—And they shall not sorrow any more at all.

IN abundance scripture passages might be adduced, in proof of the sentiment now under consideration. In the margin the reader is referred to a few. †

FEW events it is thought, which are yet to be accomplished, are predicted with more clearness, than the return of the Jews to the land of Canaan, when their character shall correspond with directions and laws God gave to them by Moses, respecting their moral conduct.

2. THE promises respecting the numerosness of the seed of Abraham and their great prosperity, and also respecting the extent of territory they were to possess, will it is believed, have an accomplishment in full.

How vastly numerous Abraham's seed should be, we have seen in the promises which God made to him. When they shall return to the land of Canaan, *in the latter days*, they will increase in number, vastly beyond what they were, at any former period. God says concerning Israel, * *Ye are not my people*, Yet immediately is added, what shall be *in the latter days*, respecting their increasing according to the promise. *Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea*, which cannot be measured, nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in

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†. Ezek. 37. 21. to the end---and chapt. 39. 23. to the end---and chapt. 28. 24. 25. 26. Ec. Ec. * Hos. 1. 9, 10.

the PLACE where it was said unto them, ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, ye are the sons of the living God. They will then be more prosperous, and numerous than ever they had been. This is the promise. ¶ And the LORD thy God, will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it, and he will do thee good, & multiply thee more than thy fathers. So vastly will they increase, and multiply, that the country where they once lived, and from which they are now rejected, which is called the land of their destruction cannot contain them. This is the representation given by the prophet. † For thy waste, and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction shall even now be too narrow for thee by reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away. The children which thou shall have after thou hast left the other, shall say again in thine ears, the place is too strait for me; give place to me that I may live. The promises respecting the prosperity, and happiness of the children of Israel, will then be accomplished. Their glory, and splendor will far outshine anything of the kind they had experienced. As has been observed.

3. THEY will then enjoy more peace, and safety, than ever before, at any time.

PEACE, although enjoyed by the Israelites at certain seasons, was interrupted by internal dissensions or foreign enemies. But the time will be, when the implements of war, will be formed into utensils for husbandry. Says the prophet, * They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall see eve-

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¶ Deut. 30.5. †. Isai. 49.19.20. * Mic. 4.3-4.

ry man under his vine, and under his fig-tree, and none shall make them afraid. Envy, spite, revenge, and all the rough, and barbarous, and cruel passions of the human soul will be laid, and men will live in love, and peace, and harmony. This is represented, by metaphorical expressions, in the following manner. ¶ *The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid : and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them.* And the cow, and the bear shall feed, their young ones shall lie down together : and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, & the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice-den : They shall not hurt, nor destroy, in all my holy mountain.

4. THESE happy, and prosperous, and glorious times are to be permanent, and the seed of Abraham will be no more cast off by God, nor rejected from the land of Canaan, but they will inherit it forever.

THE following are a few of the declarations of sacred writ respecting the permanent residence of the Jews in the land of Canaan, when they shall return there, after their long dispersion. † *For the people shall dwell in Zion, at Jerusalem, THOU SHALT WEEP NO MORE* ‡ *Thou shalt no more be termed FORSAKEN ; neither shall thy land be termed DESOLATE.* § *Whereas thou hast been forsaken, and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make the an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations.* Thy people shall be all righteous : they shall inherit the land FOREVER. One passage more will be mentioned. * *Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them, it shall be an everlasting cov-*

¶. *Isai. 11. 6, to 9.* † *Isai. 30. 19.* ‡ *Isai. 62. 4.* § *Isai. 60. 15, and 21.* * *Ezek. 37. 26.*

sant with them, and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them FOR EVERMORE.

WE have now seen what character God required his church to sustain in its infancy, & what promises were made to it. There was such a defect in character, that the promises were not, and are not yet accomplished. But in the millennium, the Jews will act up to the divine requirements more fully, and then there will be a more full, and complete accomplishment of the divine promises. They will form a character, not by a different system of moral rules, and precepts, but the very same, which God delivered to Moses, and he to the people. It will not be, therefore a new character, essentially different, but the same which the church of God sustained under the Old Testament, but advanced to a greater degree of perfection. There God will bestow on them all those privileges, and blessings which lie in the promises. For the enjoyment of these, by divine grace, they will be prepared. *In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none, and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found, for I will pardon them whom I reserve.*

IF, therefore, the character of the Jews, and the whole church of God in the millennium, will be the same, which God required his people to sustain, under the Old Testament, as is evidently the case, the consequence is, the church is the same, in every age.

FROM what has come into view under the last inference respecting the sameness of the church under the Old Testament, and New, the wisdom, power, and goodness of God, displayed

played, in setting up, and preserving, and conducting his church, from age to age, claim our thankful praise. For although it has been under different modes of external administration : and although it has been, and yet will be, in different periods of time, under very different circumstances, it is notwithstanding, the church, the ~~same~~^{covenant} holy society. Incorporated ~~by~~ⁱⁿ the ~~same~~^{common} ~~moral~~^{spiritual} duties ; always having the ~~same~~^{common} character : animated with the ~~same~~^{common} spirit : exercising the ~~same~~^{common} temper, living by the ~~same~~^{common} faith : and all united to the ~~same~~^{common} head. The ~~same~~^{common} church, therefore, in time, and eternity. The difference there may be in character, at different times, is, as before observed, not in kind, but degree. By Solomon this idea is expressed. "But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." As it is with a particular believer, so it is with the church : progressing towards perfection.

To one idea more we will attend before we pass to another inference. It is this. By what way Jesus Christ will ever have an holy church on earth, or in heaven, is not seen, if, as the Baptists say, the church under the Old Testament was an unholy church, and nothing more than a civil, or political combination of persons. If this be really the case, the Bible plainly teaches us, that the Gentiles were grafted into the Old Testament church before the Jews were rejected ; and that the Jews will again be grafted into the same Olive-tree, from which they are now, for their unbelief, *broken off*. The consequence is, the church then will be unholy. If, therefore, God set up an unholy church under the Old

Testament

Testament, he continues it, still unholy under the New. For men, in succeeding generations, are not incorporated into a new church, but into one which already had existence. If, then, this sentiment of the baptists, be correct, God has not yet had, nor will he ever have, an holy church on earth, or in heaven. The sentiment, if true, goes far towards proving universal damnation.

9. FROM the subject before us we learn, that the church under the Old Testament was not a type of the church under the New.

"CEREMONIAL holiness," say the baptists, "was all that was required of the Israelites in order to constitute them members of the church ; and that kind of holiness, being typical of moral holiness ; the church under the Old Testament was a type of the church under the New."

IF this hypothesis be true, it is a matter of indifference with God, what the *real character* of an Israelite was, in order to be a meet subject of church-membership. If his heart were full of all uncleanness, and abominable hypocrisy, and wickedness, yet if he was punctual in keeping up the forms, and attending the externals of their religion, had, in the sight of God, the requisite qualifications for church-membership. The absurdity of such a sentiment has been exposed. It is most reproachful to the holy ONE.

IT is believed, that the church set up in the family of Abraham, was the true church of God, spiritual, or holy : as really so, as is the gospel church. The baptists say it was typical of the gospel church. But *their assertion is no proof*. The laboring oar is in their hands : and it is their business to prove, if they can,

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That the Old Testament church was a type of the New. But this has not been made evident by them, and it is thought, cannot be ; because it contradicts the uniform language of both Testaments.

BUT although it does not belong to us, to prove a negative proposition, an attempt, however, will be made, by bringing into view some thoughts on the subject, to prove, that the church, under the Old Testament, was not a type of the church under the New.

THE Abrahamic covenant, which was the charter of the church under the Old Testament, and still is, required real holiness. It was established, and in operation, four hundred and thirty years as St. Paul tells us, before the law of ceremonies. He, therefore, says, the Sinai covenant did not disannul the Abrahamic, but it remained in force, notwithstanding the Sinai covenant. The apostle's words are, **And this I say, he speaks with confidence, that the covenant which was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise.*

By promise here is meant, not the Sinai, but the Abrahamic covenant. A covenant, therefore, in which God required real holiness. And this was universally required of the Israelites, through the whole of the Old Testament, as the only condition of their being his people, or church. And for want of this, judgments were sent on them, one time after another : and they were, because destitute of it, finally, rejected by God. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off. That church, therefore,

was an holy church, and the character of its real members—Those who were so in God's sight, was formed, not by yielding obedience to ceremonial, but moral precepts. In the same manner is formed the character of those who are the true members of the church, under the gospel. The character is the same, and, therefore, it cannot be true that the church under the Old Testament, was a type of the church which was to exist under the New. Besides,

THE church under the gospel is a continuation of that which had existed in all ages before. The same *House of God*; the same *kingdom of God*; the same *fold of Christ*; and the same *Olive-tree*, under both dispensations. Absurd would it be to say that an house, or a tree is a type of itself: or that a man is a type of himself. But not more absurd than to say, as the baptists do, "that the Old Testameht church was a type of the New."

IF the church under the former dispensation, possessed such a character, as is essential to the being of the church, it was not designed to be a type of the church under the gospel. And that it possessed such a character, is evident, because God required the same character of the Israelites, as the condition of their being his people or church, which will be universally prevalent, among the Jews, and all other people, in the millennium: and the promises made to the Israelites, involve the glory and happiness of that time. In the millennium, the glory and happiness, the prosperity, and holiness of the church, according to Bible representation, will far exceed the state of the gospel church, in regard to peace, prosperity and purity, until that happy time shall commence. But there would be no propriety in saying, that

the church now is typical of the church in the millennium ; because the church, which will then exist, is the same which now exists ; yet it might be said with a fairer claim to truth ; because the difference between the character of the church *in the latter days*, will be greater than is the difference between the character of the church under the gospel, previous to that time, and its character under the Old Testament. In the millennium, the church will have the same character, which it will have in heaven. It has the same character now, which it will have in the millennium. It had the same character under the Old Testament, which it now has under the gospel. The difference of character, at different periods, and under different modes of administration, consists, as has been frequently remarked, in the *eminency, or degrees,* but not in the *nature or kind of Holiness.*

If the church, which was in being under the Old Testament, were a type, only of the church which now exists ; we may with the same propriety say, that the church which is now in existence is typical of that which will exist in the millennium. And the church, which will exist in the millennium, will be typical of the church in heaven. So that, according to this notion of the Baptists, "That the church under the Old Testament, was a type of the church under the New," we have, all shadow and no substance, in regard to the church, from first to last. Such a sentiment looks down with contempt on the church God set up in this world ; it savours exceedingly, of a proud vain glorious spirit. *Stand by thyself, I am holier than thou.* Christians are cautioned, by the apostle, against harbouring such a proud, and contemptuous

contemptuous temper towards the Old Testament church. * *Burst not against the branches.* Baptists are desired to think of this, and not vilify the ancient church of God, to support their own.

As the church under the Old Testament, was not a type of the church under the New, so circumcision, under that dispensation, was not a type of baptism under the gospel.

THAT the Abrahamic covenant is the covenant of grace, and is the same for substance in every age ; and that it was to operate under every dispensation ; and under all the different circumstances in which the church might be, is clear from both testaments. The *same* religion is enjoined, uniformly, and the *same* character, and the *same* terms of church-membership, are required in the Old and New Testament. In regard to external administrations, and the circumstances of the church ; and in regard to the influences of the holy spirit being bestowed, less or more, abundantly, and the degrees of real holiness, there may be a diversity ; the church is, notwithstanding, substantially, the *same* at all times. Hence it is easily seen, that the church in one age is not typical of the church in another. And by reasoning thus, concerning it, which corresponds with the scheme of the bible, it is obvious, that circumcision was not a type of baptism, but was a seal of the covenant of grace, by which the church then *was* and still *is* incorporated ; and it answered all the ends, and designs, which are answered by baptism. Circumcision, and baptism being seals of the *same* covenant, and sacraments of the *same* significance, the former cannot be typical of the latter.

It is said* Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. Circumcision, which was the appointed seal of the covenant, which God established with him, was, by the divine direction put on Abraham. || And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised. By this it appears, that God appointed circumcision to be a seal of the covenant on his part, by which Abraham, and his seed, had assurance of the accomplishment of divine promises. On the part of Abraham, and his seed, who should submit to this ordinance, it was an obligation to duty : to believe in the Messiah : to put off the old man, and put on the new, and in a word, to live in all holy obedience, as the command to Abraham, and his seed was *Walk before me and be thou perfect.* The reason regeneration, in the Old Testament, is expressed by circumcision or being circumcised, is here obvious. Thus Moses directs, † *Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff-necked.* He says again. ‡ *The LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.* By the prophet, circumcision is used in the same sense. § *Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and take away the foreskin of your heart.* By this mode of expression, God taught the Israelites, the spiritual meaning and import of circumcision : the sign being used for that which was signified by it. In this respect, it is parallel with baptism ; for in the New Testament regeneration is not unfrequently expressed by baptism, or

* Gen. 15. 6. || Rom. 4 11. † Deut. 10 16.
‡ Deut. 30. 6. § Jer. 4. 4.

being baptized. But this idea will naturally fall in our way in another place, and shall only observe here, that what has been said is evidence that circumcision was not typical of baptism; for they are both sacraments of the same design, import, and importance.



A Careful Enquiry &c.

Discourse V.

Gen. XVII 1 *Walk before me, and be thou perfect.*

Rom. XI 20. *WELL; Because of unbeliefs they were broken off.*

WE shall not spend time in recapitulating observations already made, but pass, immediately, to the inference principally in view. Which is the following.

10. THAT infants, under the gospel dispensation, have a right to baptism, is evident, from a view of the subject, to which we have been attending.

WHEN it is said, that infants, under the gospel dispensation, have a right to baptism, the meaning is, the infant seed of those who are members of the visible church, have this right, this right results from the relation the infant stands in, to its parent, and the relation the pa-

rent stands in, to the church, and the relation the church stands in, to Jesus Christ, and the relation he stands in, to God : He, by God the father, being constituted head of the church. * This relation exists, really in no instance, but where there is a character truly holy : but it exists, visibly, where there is a character visibly holy. And this visible holiness, is, to us all the evidence we can obtain of *real* holiness of heart.

By Faith, the relation, which exists between God, and the believer is formed. For thus it is written. ¶ *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the SONS of God even to them that believe on his name.* The faith here mentioned is always consequent upon regeneration, and is an evidence of it, but never is exercised before regeneration. || *Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* This lays a foundation for all succeeding holy exercises. And according to the scheme of grace, it is from hence, only that any one has a title to the promises, and a right to special ordinances. Whoever will attend with care, and candor to the mind of God, as it is expressed in both testaments, will find it is believed, these sentiments to be the prominent features of the religion of the bible ; and that a title to promises made and privileges to be enjoyed depends solely, on having a religion of this kind. If men would lay aside their prejudices and study the Old Testament they will find, that God in every part of it, urges the necessity of real holiness, as the only qualification for the enjoyment of what he promised his people of old ; and for an acceptable attendance on all his institutions ; and that

* Eph. 1. 22. ¶ Joh. 1. 12. || Joh. 1. 13.

that these things are expressed with as much precision in the Old, as they are in the New Testament. These are the leading sentiments of the religion God has established for sinners, and, therefore, they are taught, plainly.

If we see a character visibly holy, the person sustaining it must be considered, and treated, by us, as really holy. And this visible holiness is that, which qualifies him for a place in the visible church, as to man, and a right, to special ordinances. Because his visible holiness is all the evidence we can obtain, that he is possessed of that real holiness which God requires of him.

THESE prefatory observations being made, a more critical and direct attention will be paid to the inference now before us.

WE say that the infants of such as are members of the visible church are to be baptised. By baptists, this is denied. But if the observations which have been made in preceding pages be agreeable to the revealed mind of God, as it is believed they are, and naturally flow from the scriptures ; our sentiment is established beyond controversy, and their's falls to the ground. The baptism of infants, which is the sentiment meant to be established, will, when divested of sophistical reasoning, appear to be perfectly conformable with the divine plan respecting the church, and strike the mind with clear, and irresistible evidence.

If it be asked, "Where shall we obtain such complete evidence in this matter ?" It is answered, by taking into view the divine plan, generally, as it respects his church, from first to last, according to the Bible representation : taking unto view also the character of the church as described in every part of Divine revelation and

and the privileges and blessings, it was to enjoy.

IN reasoning upon the subject before us, if our aim be to discover, what is really, the mind of God, no method can be pursued, properly, but one which will lead us into a knowledge of the general, and great plan of God, under every dispensation, and in every age. When we are thus examining the subject we must be careful to form our opinion by divine declarations and not press scripture texts into our service, by wresting them to correspond with our own sentiments, previously adopted. When we attend to the Bible, and see the vast plan of God, there revealed in reference to his church, and trace the pleasing, and wonderful subject, step by step, and view the church in different periods of time, and under different modes of divine administration, externally, and different circumstances, from the time, in which the visible church was set up in the family of Abraham, to the consummation of all things : we find the *same* moral duties, uniformly, enjoined by God, the very *same* character, uniformly required ; and the *same* church always existing.

If a view of the church be taken, and particular attention be paid to the divine commands, by conforming to which, a character was formed, and still *is* which *did* qualify, and still *does* qualify persons to be meet subjects of church-membership : If attention also be paid to the divine promises respecting privileges, & blessings which *were* to be enjoyed, and still *are* and the ground on which they *were*, and still *are* to be enjoyed ; it will be seen, that the infinitely wise God, when He first set up a church in the family of Abraham, adopted a plan, in reference to his church which should run parallel with time, without any essential alteration

alteration in its constitution, or character. The same spiritual worship *was* and always will *be* necessary to its very existence : and the same divine communications necessary to its happiness. God therefore in this world, and in this way, *was*, and still *is*, and will *be* forming those who are the true members of his church, for heavenly glory, and happiness. Into which, when they shall be admitted, there will be, not an essential alteration of character, but a perfection, only of the same character which before they sustained. Agreeably to this the apostle says, * *But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.* The plan, therefore, which God at first adopted, in regard to his church, he has been pursuing in all former ages, is still pursuing ; and will be putting into execution the very same plan, until time shall be swallowed up in eternity, And then the redeemed church, will, for ever and ever, be reaping the glorious fruits of the same divine plan. The happy consequences of it will run parallel with eternity.

FORMING our opinion, respecting the duties, and character, and privileges of the church, upon such a general, and extensive view of the vast plan of God respecting it, a plan exhibited in both Testaments, we discover a wonderful, and pleasing, and harmonious uniformity, running through the whole. In regard to external circumstances, and modes of worship, there is a variety : but in regard to that which is internal, spiritual and divine, either in worship or enjoyment, ever the same. this is the only way we can reason consistently, or scripturally, upon this subject. It is not by attending to a part, but the whole of the plan of

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* 1 Cor. 13. 10 II. 12.

the bible, so far as we are able, that we must form our sentiments.

THE Baptists put asunder what God has joined together, and argue respecting the church from a part of divine revelation, only, for they consider the Old Testament to be obsolete. In this way of treating the important subject, they substitute, it is feared, men's opinions, in the room of divine institutions. Reasoning as they do, from a part of divine revelation, only, their appropriate scheme is embarrassed with unscriptural sentiments, and inconsistent consequences. Their sentiments therefore cannot be supported.

THE obvious reason Abraham was directed by God, to leave his native *country*, and his *kindred*, and his *father's house*, was, as we remarked in the introduction, that the true religion might be upheld, and propagated, in a time of general apostasy of the nations. God designed to continue, in the family of Abraham, the same religion, which had existed among good people previously to his being called: and not to introduce a new kind of religion. It was the same by which the character of Abraham was formed; on account of which he was called * *The friend of God*. And the reason he was so called was *He believed God*. He was a believer. Abraham being || *Strong in the faith*, the propriety of the divine conduct, in making choice of him to be the root of the visible church, is very apparent. Because the covenant, which God was now about to establish with him, was the same in substance, which had existed between God, and good people, but the terms or conditions of it were now more largely, and particularly stated. This same covenant

**Jam. 2. 23.* ||*Rom. 4. 20.*

Covenant was to exist, and be in operation among the seed of Abraham, and continue to be the standing covenant between God, and his church in all ages. In the covenant God established with Abraham, every moral duty, and every gracious promise, were, summarily expressed. What therefore, God enjoined on Abraham, and his seed he enjoined substantially on his church, in all ages. And the promises God made to him and them, he made, in like manner, to the church, in all ages. For faith the apostle, *¶ But godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.* And the term, or condition upon which the children of Israel were to enjoy what God promised them, is the same to his church in every age, yea in eternity.

SUFFICIENT reasons occur, from the foregoing observations, to show us why the Abrahamic covenant is referred to so frequently, in both testaments : by that covenant the church was incorporated, and still is,—it was, and is still the charter of the church, by which it holds all its immunities, and privileges. To this covenant Mary had reference when she said, *† He hath holpen his servant Israel in remembrance of his mercy;* meaning by this, the Abrahamic covenant, as her next words evidence : *As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and his seed.* To the same covenant, Zacharias the father of John Baptist, referred, when he said, **To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; The oath which he swear to our father Abraham.* The apostles frequently refer to the Abrahamic covenant

*¶ 1 Tim. 4.8. † Luk. 1. 54. 55. * Luk. 72. 73.*

covenant, in their epistles, which are addressed to christian churches, gathered from among the posterity of Japheth. It is sometimes called, THE PROMISE: and sometimes, THE COVENANT. ¶

GOD entered into covenant with Abraham, gave him precepts, and made promises to him, in a view of the piety, and holiness of his character. And on the same ground he required him to be circumcised. Circumcision being the appointed seal of that covenant, which God had established with him. It is, therefore, called *the seal of the righteousness of the faith of Abraham*, which he had before he was circumcised.

RESPECTING the covenant God established with Abraham, which is so frequently mentioned in the Old Testament, and New, the foregoing observations having now been made, it is asked, whether or not, in the whole transaction of this important business, the same was understood, and meant to be enjoined on the seed of Abraham, that was enjoined on him? And, did not God require *them* to sustain the same character which he (Abraham) sustained, before God called him, and entered into covenant with him, and also, afterwards?—And were not promises made to *them* upon the same condition they were made to *him*?—And was not circumcision designed to be a seal of the same covenant, and of the same righteousness of faith to the seed of Abraham, in all their generations, that it was to Abraham himself? Whoever will undertake to answer these questions in the negative, will be driven, by unavoidable necessity; from consequences which

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¶ Gal. 3. 17. Act. 3. 25. Rom. 4. 14. and 9. 8. Gal. 4. 28. †Rom. 4. 11.

will certainly follow, to renounce, at once, both the Old and New Testament. To say as the baptists do, "That holiness was required of Abraham, but not of his seed, as the condition of enjoying what God promised," is absurd & in plain terms contradicts clear & express scripture declarations. For were not the seed of Abraham commanded to love, believe in, worship, and serve, the same God, and in the same manner, and for the same reasons, and from the same motives, and considerations, on which Abraham was commanded to love, believe in, worship, and serve him ? certainly this is the case. It being so, that command, *Walk before me, and be thou perfect*, was binding, not only on Abraham, but also on all his seed, in all their generations. And the promises *I will be a God to thy seed*—*And I will give them the land of Canaan*, were made upon the condition of their complying with the command stated in the Abrahamic covenant. Upon the same consideration, and in a view of the same character existing in them, which Abraham had, all their male children were to be circumcised. If they had the same faith which he had, when it is said, **He believed in the Lord, and it was counted to him for righteousness*, the Israelites had a right, to the seal of the covenant, for themselves and their infant seed, but upon no other consideration. Obligation to circumcise, as it respected themselves or their infant seed, was from the divine command: but a right to make use of the seal of the covenant, depended, solely, on their character.

An abreviate, of the leading sentiments contained in the preceding discourses, and which lie scattered in all parts of them, has now been

*Gen. 15.6

presented to the reader, under the last inference. By which he may with more ease, and clearness discover the propriety, and connexion of the whole design. And if, in these discourses, a scriptural statement, of the mind of Jesus Christ has been given, the *Baptism of infants*, and the sentiments connected with it, can be vindicated by clear, rational, and scripture evidence: and the scheme of the baptists cannot be supported.

BEFORE we close the subject, answer will be given to some objections, which, perhaps, the baptists may make, to some things which have been said, and are believed by us, to follow from what has come into view in preceding pages.

1. Obj. "By the divine command all the Israelites were required to be circumcised, and to have their male children, at eight days old, circumcised: this certainly cannot apply to us under the gospel."

Ans. IT may apply perhaps, in regard to the design of the command, if not in regard to the time specified. All who live in christian lands, are under obligation to be baptized; for all are under obligation to believe in Christ, and to attend all the ordinances of the gospel. And if they do not, they are guilty of criminal negligence.

THE command, enjoining circumcision on the Israelites, it is to be observed, was subsequent upon, not prior to the command, *Walk before me, and be thou perfect*. This taught them what their character must be. The command is not, *Be circumcised*, and then form a character corresponding with the command. But be possessed of the character, required in the covenant, and then receive the seal. It is not

not, be circumcised, and then believe ; but believe, and be circumcised. Having the faith of God's elect, was that, and that, only, which gave an Israelite, a right to the seal of the covenant. And having this faith, he had, according to the constitution God had established, a right to the seal of the covenant, for himself, and his children. The Old, and New Testament dispensation, are in this respect exactly alike. Under the Old Testament dispensation, all were required to be holy, and to be circumcised. So under the gospel, all are required to believe, and be baptized. What respects the infant seed of such parents as sustain the character required by God, will be more particularly attended to, in another place. It will only be noticed, in this place, that the command enjoining circumcision on all, in the manner stated, corresponds, exactly, with the plan of the gospel, in regard to baptism.

2. Obj. "All that was requisite to intitle the infant seed of the Israelites to the seal of the Abrahamic covenant was, their descent from Hebrew parents. Being descendants from Abraham, in the line of Isaac, and Jacob, they had a right to that ordinance. Baptism, therefore, cannot come in the room of circumcision, nor can they both be sacraments, of the same import, and use."

Ans. To assert, and to prove, are different. The above assertion is easily made, but not so easily proved. If the Baptists make this objection, it lies on them to prove it. But they have not yet made proof of it, and it is believed, no proof can be obtained, from arguments taken out of the Bible. And we must be careful in matters of so much importance, not to substitute the opinions of men, and churches, in the place of divine truth.

THE general design of this small treatise is meant to be a confutation of such a sentiment : and the ideas which are dispersed in all parts of it, are a full answser, it is thought, to such an objection.

A direct answer to this objection, lies in what was observed by way of reply, to the first objection ; to which the reader is refered. It was not parentage, or being born of Hebrew parents, but religion, or an holy character, only, which gave, according to the nature of the Abrahamic covenant a right to the seal of that covenant.

By way of reply it may be further observed. Circumcision was not confined to the nation of Israel : or the descendants of Abraham. The door was always open, to those of other nations for admission into the church with the Israelites, and to the ordinance of circumcision, if they desired it. They were admitted to all the privileges of the Israel of God. If they espoused their religion, and, submitted to its laws, and regulations. In this respect, it was then as it is now. The heathen, if they embrace the religion of Christ, will be admitted to baptism, and enjoy the privileges of the gospel church.

THAT circumcision was not administered to an Hebrew, or the male-children of the Hebrews, because they were lineally descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is a clear case : it needs no further proof. Some particular qualifications was requisite, to give right to the seal of the Abrahamic covenant, more than being born of Hebrew parents.

3. Obj. THE children of Israel circumcised all their males ; as in Joshua's time : and afterwards, this appears to be the case even un-

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till their destruction by the Romans. From this it appears evident, that holiness of heart was not required of them as a condition of their being the people, or church of God : nor was it necessary to their being proper subjects of the seal of the Abrahamic covenant.

Ans. I. THE conduct of Joshua in circumcising the children of Israel, as he did at Gilgal, * was agreeable, it is conceived, to the sentiment advocated, generally, in these discourses, viz. that moral virtue or real religion was required of the Israelites as the sole condition of their enjoying promised blessings, and privileges. To be the church of God was one of these privileges : and as a mark, or token of their belonging to God's church, they were to be circumcised.

WHILE the children of Israel were travelling through the wilderness, circumcision was omitted. ¶ When they were come into Canaan, Joshua circumcised them. Those who were adults when they came out of Egypt, were, as their history informs us, a generation, exceedingly, perverse, and wicked. For their unbelief they were doomed to die in the wilderness; and they were now all dead. Those who were minors when they came out of Egypt, and those who were born in the wilderness, God was pleased, by his grace, to make a generation to his praise ; the people were eminent for piety, as appears from many observations respecting their character. Speaking concerning them at this time God says, ¶ *Israel was holiness unto the LORD.* God tells them he had afflicted them † to humble them. A good effect, a wilderness

¶ 3:

life:

* *Jos. 5. 2. to 9. ¶ Jos. 5. 4. 5. ¶ Jer. 2. 3. ¶ Deut. 8. 2. 3.*

life had on them. Joshua, therefore, says †
*Cleave unto the LORD your God, as ye have done
unto this day.*

PREVIOUS to the death of Moses, the children of Israel renew covenant and in a solemn and public manner dedicated themselves to God and His service of which notice has been taken §. In which transaction there is visible evidence of real religion. When these things are all laid together in one view, their is evidence sufficient of the piety of that generation, to justify the conduct of Joshua, when he *circumcised the children of Israel.*

2. BUT if it be admitted that the children of Israel did practice circumcision, generally, in every age, until their destruction by the Romans, what does it prove ? it proves just nothing at all. To say they did right, because they did so, is somewhat of a singular way of reasoning upon the subject. In moral matters, we must derive our sentiments, not from the practice or sentiments of men, or churches, but from the revealed mind of God. If that be examined carefully, in reference to the sentiments now advocated, their is, it is judged clear and abundant evidence, that God required real holiness as a necessary qualification for church-membership. If, therefore, the wicked took God's covenant into their mouths, and under the prevalency of such a temper of heart as their's is, presumed to dedicate themselves, or their children to God, it was solemn mockery, and a shameful abuse of the sacrament of circumcision : and therefore, an heinous affront to the God of Abraham. If in times of general corruption and wickedness, circumcision were universally practiced, they did wickedly, in so doing

doing ; because they had no directions nor any warrant, for their conduct, in the covenant God established with Abraham, nor from any thing found in the Bible. If a church or the churches, generally, should admit, to special ordinances, those who are not visibly christians, would their doing it prove they did right ? certainly not. Neither did the conduct of the Israelites, when they put the seal of the covenant if they ever did, upon any who were visibly unholy, prove that they did what was agreeable to the mind of God.

4. Obj. "The church under the Old Testament was national, circumcision, therefore, was a seal of a national covenant, only, and respected national prosperity, and especially the enjoyment of the land of Canaan."

1. Ans. If this be true, this is one consequence which will certainly follow ; The civil, or temporal circumstances of the Israelites, were in the divine view, of vastly more importance, than those things which respected their spiritual, and eternal state. Temporalities, according to the objection, was the main obj & in the view of God, in all his dealings with the people. God was particularly careful about their temporal interest ; and those things which respected their civil polity were regulated, and established in the best manner, while little or nothing was done to regulate their conduct in matters of religion. Is not this absurd ? Judge ye.

2. THE covenant God established with Abraham, is an affair of too much solemnity, and importance, to respect, solely or even principally the grant of a certain portion of this earth, to a particular nation. God, whose the earth is, has a right to give any particular spot of this globe to whom he pleases. [WIT

WITH this solemn, and most sublime style, is the Abrahamic covenant introduced. * I AM THE ALMIGHTY GOD. This introduction raises our expectation. Well what does THE ALMIGHTY GOD say to Abraham. The sum of all he promises Abraham is according to the Baptists, *I will give thee and thy seed after thee*, the land of Canaan. The infinitely wise God, it is believed, must have had, a design, vastly more important than this, in establishing a covenant with Abraham. And for God to appoint, as a seal of a national covenant, only, the painful rite of circumcision, to be an assurance of enjoying the land of Canaan, does not, when compared with things of infinitely more importance, which are contained in the Abrahamic covenant, appear compatible with the wisdom, and goodness of God. For,

3. How great, or good soever, in themselves those promises are, which God made to Abraham, and his seed, respecting Canaan, and blessings of a temporal nature, to be enjoyed, they are, notwithstanding, of small consideration, very small indeed, when compared wit' spiritual blessings promised in that covenant. This one promise, *I will be a God to thee, and thy seed after thee*, exceeds, in real worth, and importance, all the promises made to Abraham and his seed, which have for their object, the land of Canaan, and temporal prosperity. The things of this world are nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity, when compared with spiritual things. The possession and enjoyment of this world, in all its glory, is nothing, when compared with the enjoyment of the presence of God in Christ. And this

what is promised in the Abrahamic covenant.

THAT the Israelites were not under obligation to observe the ceremonial law, is not pretended to be intimated, but what is urged, and is thought to be supported, is, that a character formed by the practice of moral virtue which consists in yielding obedience to moral precepts, was that which constituted them the church of God, and gave title to promised blessings. Nor is it said, that God made no promises to them which respected temporal blessings, and great outward prosperity; that there are many such promises, has been through all the discourses, admitted. But what has been, and still is insisted on, is, that the promises, made to Abraham and his seed had for their principal object spiritual, and eternal things. Such a view of the divine plan puts a clue into our hands, which will conduct us safely, and consistently, through the wonderful, and various series of events which have taken place, and are still taking place, under the holy, and wise providence of God, respecting the Jews. And it is believed, the divine conduct can no otherwise be vindicated, in events that have taken place respecting that nation.

BUT if, as the Baptists say, the land of Canaan, and great outward happiness in the enjoyment of temporal blessings, were the principal objects of the promises made by God, to Abraham, and his seed: and these were to be enjoyed in consequence of an observance of the ceremonial law: the divine conduct, in ordering events respecting his ancient covenant people as they have, and are at this day taking place, is wholly unaccountable. Reason assisted by divine revelation, cannot discern the propriety

propriety, and rectitude, or goodness of the divine conduct, in rejecting the Jews when he did, for they had, even at the time God rejected them, that religion, which, according to the baptists, God required of them. They were zealous for the ceremonial law, even until their destruction by the Romans ; as appears by many things which occur in the New Testament. If therefore, circumcision was appointed by God, and made use of by the people of Israel, as the seal of a national covenant, and what gave them a title to the land of Canaan, it is not seen how God acted consistently with his own promises when he rejected them : for they lived in the daily practice of the religion He required, according to the baptists, and they had, in their flesh, the seal appointed by God, by which they were to be entitled to, and to hold, and enjoy, that good land for ever. God was therefore, holden, by his own solemn promise, to continue them in it. It as the baptists say, circumcision was a seal of a national covenant, then national blessings *must* be granted, so long as circumcision was observed ; God must continue them in Canaan.

THE Jews are *broken off* ; are rejected. I would thank the Baptists, to give a rational, and consistent, and scriptural vindication of the Divine conduct in this matter. On their own principles, it is believed, it cannot be done. If it can, it will throw great light upon the subject, which as it now stands is as to them involved in impenetrable darkness, and wholly unaccountable. The character and government of God, it is believed is very highly injured by them. Not through design, it is conceived, but thro' inattention to the great scheme of God respecting his church.

4. FOR an admission into the church, under the old testament, the door was always open, to those of other nations. They must however own the God of Israel, espouse their religion, and be circumcised. But to what were they intitled by this? not to a lot of land in Canaan, but to spiritual blessings, which were promised in the Abrahamic covenant: God would be their God. If they believed in the God of Abraham, and had the same faith which he had, they had a right to the seal of the covenant, which God established with him. And thus they became * *Abraham's seed, and heirs, according to promise. Heirs of spiritual blessings. Heirs, not of the earthly, but heavenly Canaan.*

5. THE controversy which the God of Israel had with his people at one time and another, was not on account of their neglecting ceremonial, but moral duties; as has been noticed; circumcision, therefore, respected something more than the title to the land of Canaan; and was designed to be something, more than a seal of a national, or civil covenant; because, by reading the history of the children of Israel, we find, that a punctual observance of the ordinance of circumcision, in the outward sign, was no security against the judgments of God. Hence appears another mistaken notion of the baptists, and by these observations their scheme is seen to be very wide from the bible plan. If circumcision were a part of the ceremonial law, and only typical of baptism, as they suppose, and an outward observance of the externals of their religion were all which was necessary to constitute the Israelites the church of God, and secure promised

* Gal. 3. 29.

mised blessings, whence was it, God was frequently, so exceeding displeased with them ? whence was it, they were so frequently overwhelmed with such dreadful calamities ? and whence is it that they have now almost for two thousand years groaned under the distinguishing tokens of the divine anger ? No nation under heaven, ever suffering such evils as they have. Their sufferings are without parallel in the annals of the history of any other nation.

6. OUTWARD COVENANT, OR circumcision, it is hence obvious, sealed no covenant blessings to the Israelites, and was not of least account in the sight of God, unless there was also inward, or spiritual circumcision. The apostle says, || *They are not all Israel, which are of Israel.* And again. * *He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh, but he is a Jew which is one inwardly ; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of God.* And to this may be added the following, † *I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of satan.*

FROM the foregoing observations it is evident, that circumcision was not a seal of a national covenant, nor was it appointed by God, to be applied to the Israelites, as a token or assurance only, that they should enjoy the land of Canaan. It was a seal of a covenant comprehending, greater, and more excellent blessings. For outward circumcision was of no worth at all, in the sight of God, unless there was inward circumcision of the heart.

5. Obj. FEMALES could not be subjects of the seal of the covenant under the Old Testament

¶ Rom. 9. 6. * Rom. 2. 28. 29. † Rev. 2. 9.

ment dispensation : but under the New such is the seal, that females, as well as males, may be the subjects of it. This by baptists is said to be an evidence that the covenant, operating under the two dispensations are different : and that circumcision, and baptism are sacraments, not of the same nature, and design."

Ans. I. FROM the apostacy of our first parents, to the nativity of our Saviour, females were under a particular mark of the divine displeasure. The woman first sinned. From the creation to the time in which Malachi, the last Old Testament prophet, lived, is computed to be almost four thousand years. In all that long period, few pious women are mentioned : some, however, who were very eminent for religion ; The history of the New Testament is short, of one hundred years, yet many more pious women are mentioned in that short period, than in the long period under the Old Testament. So was the will of God, that such should be the seal of the covenant under that dispensation, that it should be a constant admonition to the sex of His displeasure against them. Holy women of old, notwithstanding this, were not cut off from the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant, for God was their God, although they were not subjects, personally, of the seal of the covenant.

OUR Saviour was born of *the seed of the woman*, He, under the gospel, has appointed a seal of the covenant of which women are capable subjects. Since the birth of Christ, that particular mark of the displeasure of God against the sex is removed. Under the gospel, it is generally believed, there are more pious women than men. In churches there are generally, more sisters than brothers.

2. WOMEN, under that dispensation, were included with the men, as they now are in the civil law, and many concerns of life.

WHEN the command, enjoining circumcision, was observed agreeably to the divine appointment, females were considered, and treated as if they, personally, were circumcised : because they eat of the passover as well as men. But this was the law, **No uncircumcised person shall eat thereof.* They covenanted, as did the males. ||

FROM the different situation in which females are placed : in regard to their being subjects of the seal of the covenant, under the two dispensations, it cannot be proved, that circumcision, and baptism are seals of two covenants essentially different ; nor that their nature, use and design, are really different. All must grant, that the head of the church may alter circumstantial things which appertain to the covenant, without altering the nature of the covenant.

6. Obj. "THERE is no command, or example, in the New Testament, say the Baptists for the baptism of infants, it is not, therefore warranted by the Bible."

THAT there is not a command in the New Testament in these words, *Thou shalt baptize the infant seed of believers,* is conceded. But in a view of the religion which runs through the Bible, and the character God always required the members of his church to sustain : and in a view of the use, and design of circumcision, and who were, according to divine appointment, proper subjects of the seal of the covenant under the Old Testament, and as it appears, from a careful examination of the scriptures

*Exod. 12.48. || Deut. 29.10.11.12.

scriptures, that it was the divine design that whatever was essential to the being, and existence of the church, should proceed in one uniform, and established mode, through time: there is evidence, it is believed, tantamount to such a command. And indeed, when the whole of the divine plan, as it is laid before us in the Bible, is taken into one general view, the command enjoining infant circumcision, is a command, which, as to the subjects, is binding under the gospel, and does, therefore, enjoin the baptism of infants. This exhibits a uniform, and consistent plan respecting the church, under different external modes of administration, and all the different circumstances in which it may be, in this world. Nor is it seen, that any other consistent, and uniform plan can be drawn from divine revelation.

In giving an answer to the above objection, it will be observed,

I. BETWEEN the precepts, and promises, in the covenant God established with Abraham, when he was about setting up a visible church under the Old Testament. *And the directions, and promises of our Saviour, when he comissioned, and sent forth his apostles to build the gospel church, ¶ there is a striking agreement.

THE Abrahamic covenant is prefaced with this solemn, and pleasing declaration, I AM THE ALMIGHTY GOD. In like manner the preface to the commission of the apostles is solemn, and pleasing. ALL POWER IS GIVEN UNTO ME IN HEAVEN AND IN EARTH. Such important transactions are worthy of such solemn introductions.

IN these words God directs Abraham, *Walk before me, and be thou perfect.* The following are the directions given, by our Saviour, to his apostles. *Go ye therefore and teach all nations—Teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you.* By these directions the people, or church of God may see, what their character must be, in every age.

ABRAHAM, being instructed, and being a believer, is in covenant with God. God sees fit to appoint circumcision a seal of the covenant, and directs him to be circumcised, and to circumcise his household, and that all their men-children, should be circumcised, in their generations. Our Saviour directs his apostles : *Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the father, and of the son, and of the holy ghost.*

To Abraham and his seed, God promised his presence, *I will be a God to thee and thy seed after thee.* The promise of our Saviour to his apostles, and their successors, either in office or character, is in these words. *Lo I am with you alway even unto the end of the world.*

JESUS Christ sent his apostles abroad among the nations, to propagate the same religion, and support the same cause, and build up the same church, which had existed under the Old Testament. The great plan of God, respecting his church, was in progression ; And our Saviour designed to make use of the apostles, and their successors in office, to raise the spiritual building higher, and higher, by an advancement of the state of the church, in knowledge, and holiness, * *Till we all come as the apostle says, speaking of the church, in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the son of*

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* *Eph. 4: 13.*

God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. Our Saviour, therefore, when he commissioned his apostles brings into their view, many of the same sentiments, which he expressed to Abraham when he established his covenant with him, to remind them, that the same glorious work, holy, and ~~religious~~^{divine} was still progressing, which was expressed in the Abrahamic covenant : the christian church must practice the same religion, which he in that covenant required of Abraham, and his seed.

THE baptists will here object perhaps, and perhaps say, "Our Saviour when he sent his apostles to preach the gospel to every creature, and build up the christian church, did not enjoin it on them, nor so much as give them liberty to baptize infants, but, as he was now giving them directions, respecting their future conduct as officers in the church, he, certainly would have informed them, had it been his mind, that the infants of such as are members of the visible church should be baptized : he does not, however, direct them, ^{to} baptize the infant seed of believers, there is therefore, no warrant for it."

To such an objection it is replied. If before this time, Jesus Christ had had no church in this world, and no covenant of grace had been made with it and in operation ; and no seal of that covenant appointed by God ; and if the proper subjects of it had not been specified, and their character, and situation, particularly defined, by God, in the Old Testament, it is reasonable to suppose he would have given explicit directions to his apostles ; and informed them that the infant seed of those who are members of the visible church, had, or had not,

a right to be baptized. But many thousands of years, before our saviour sent his apostles to *preach the gospel to every creature*, the church of Christ had been in existence,—the covenant of grace had been in operation,—a seal of it appointed by God,—by him, who were the proper subjects of the seal had been stated,—and the proper qualifications for church membership had been defined, sufficiently, plain, and decided. Our Saviour, therefore, when he sent his apostles to christianize the nations, leaves the matter, in regard to infants, just as it alway had been. The apostles well knew what had been the practice of the church, all along, in reference to the circumcision of infants, and what were the divine directions upon this subject; and therefore, they would, naturally conclude what their practice, in regard to infants must be under the gospel; inasmuch as the head of the church had given them no directions, contrary to those, which were established by himself, under the Old Testament. Under that dispensation, infants were included with their parents, *thee, and thy seed*, and as they were not separated from their parents by anything said by Jesus Christ, they would infer, that under the gospel it is *you and your children*. And that the apostles so understood the matter will appear when it is observed.

2. WHAT Peter said to his hearers when he preached, and baptized, the first time, as a minister of Jesus Christ, under the gospel dispensation, agrees, exactly, with what God said to Abraham when he established the covenant with him.

IN the Abrahamic covenant, God promised to be a God to Abraham, and his seed. His seed are as really included in the covenant, as

Abraham.

Abraham himself. If they had Abraham's character, they were Abraham's seed ; and so the character, and promise was to run on from one generation to another. Agreeably to this, God gives him this direction. * *He that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you every man-child in your generations.* The children of believing Abraham are included in the covenant with him, and on account of his faith, God directs him to put the seal of the covenant on them, and so according to the plan fixed by God under the Old Testament, it was to proceed one generation after another, through that dispensation : those who were in covenant with God, their children also are considered, and treated as in covenant. Thus it continued to the time when the gospel dispensation was set up. To this we are now come.

On the day of pentecost, when the apostles were filled with the holy Ghost, Peter preached. The effect of his sermon on his audience was, || *They were pricked in the heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men, and brethren what shall we do !* An answer to this question is made by Peter in these words. *Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ.* The reason he assigns is,—*For the promise is to you and your children.* Peter in these words, states this matter to be in the situation as it was fixed by God in the Abrahamic covenant : and to that he, evidently has reference, in this statement. *There it is thee and thy seed. Here it is, You and your children.* That Jewish parents, anxious for the spiritual welfare of their children, and now more so than ever before, would wish to know what their situation would be, in this new dispensation, is

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very natural to suppose. And by what Peter says there is reason to believe, enquiry was made upon the subject. He tells them, "they would be in the same situation under the new dispensation, they were under the old. They were then included in the covenant with their parents, and so they will be now. Their right to the seal of the covenant, under that dispensation, resulted from the character of the parent, and this will still be the case under the gospel ; for it is the same covenant, and the same church ; the seal only is altered. The duties are the same, and so are the spiritual, privileges, and blessings. The religion is the same, and so are its comforts, its enjoyments, and its fruits. In the external administration, consists the principal difference, as to these things, between the two dispensations. The appendages of the covenant are altered, but the internal, and spiritual part is the same. The children of believing parents then had a right to the seal of the covenant, and so they have now. *The promise is to you, and to your children,* as it always was, so it always will be. The seal of the covenant is, therefore to be applied to persons of the same description, to which it was applied under the Old Testament.

THAT the apostles did baptize infants, no small degree of evidence lies in the following observations. Some well authenticated facts, will, however, be first mentioned. This is one. The Jews, generally, were bitter enemies to the apostles : they pursued them from place to place, with a persecuting spirit, and were always watching them, that they might find something whereof to accuse them. The Jews were exceedingly proud of their privileges and advantages. *We be Abraham's seed, say they, and were never in bondage to any man.* Another well known fact is the following.

To persuade people to renounce habits, to which they have been long accustomed, is, extremely difficult. These things being premised : it will now be supposed, that if the apostles as they travelled about the country, teaching, and baptizing, had uniformly, refused to baptize infants, have we not reason to believe it would have made an uproar among the people ? certainly we have. The Jews hated, most bitterly the apostles and the religion they taught, Now if these men, so hated, and despised, as were the apostles, had made such an innovation, on the ancient, and universal practice of the church, respecting infants, which had been in use nearly two thousand years, the Jews, it is presumed, would not have past it over in silence. They would have animadverted on the conduct of the apostles, severely : they, no doubt, would have suffered persecution on this account. But there is not one solitary instance, in the acts of the apostles, nor in the epistles, in which their conduct, in this matter is reprehended, even by their worst enemies. And the reason is obvious. Peter took early opportunity to prevent any uneasiness in the minds of people, on the subject. In the audience of a large concourse of people, on the day of pentecost, when he first officiated as a minister of Christ, Peter determines the matter as to infants by declaring, *The promise is to you and your children ;* under the present dispensation, as it was under the Old Testament. In the epistles, in the New Testament, we find there were altercations about circumcision, whether it ought, or ought not to be administered. But there are no altercations about the baptizing, or not baptizing of infants. Which concludes strongly in favor of their being baptized, inasmuch as infants were by divine order proper

subjects of the seal of the covenant, under the former dispensation. And had they been excluded in the new dispensation, we, most certainly should have heard something about it, from the quarrelsome Jews.

BUT further attention will be paid to this text * *For the promise is to you, and your children, and to all that are afar off.* The promise in the covenant is not now confined to the Jewish nation, but it is extended to *all that are afar off.* By this phrase the apostle means the Gentiles. So he describes their state before they embraced christianity. ¶ *Ye who were sometimes afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ.* To the Gentiles, as the apostle represents the matter, is the promise extended, under the gospel, and to their children, if they be called by the grace of God. Thus keeping up the idea through the whole, that children in consequence of the character of their parents, and their standing in the church, have a right, and the same claim to baptism under the gospel, which they had to circumcision under the Old Testament. If the parent be by the grace of God, called, and then unites with Christ's visible church, the promise is to his children : his character and standing being what it is, his infant seed have a right to be baptized.

3. GOD directed to circumcise households, under the Old Testament, under the New, the apostles baptized households ; in this respect under the two dispensations, there is an agreement, in regard to applying the seal of the covenant.

HOUSEHOLD circumcision was enjoined on Abraham. ¶ *He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised.*

* *Act. 2. 39.* ¶ *Eph. 2. 13.* ¶ *Gen. 21. 13.*

circumcised. Abraham, therefore, agreeably to this direction, circumcised, *the self-same day*, all the males in his family. ¶ If a stranger would keep the passover, he must be circumcised, and also his household. †

HOUSHOLDS were baptized by the apostles. The jailor's. ‡ And Lydia's. § And the *household of Stephanas.* ¶

CIRCUMCISION and baptism, it hence appears, are administered on exactly the same plan: both were administered to households. It may hence be concluded, that they are seals of the same covenant; because applied to persons of the same description, & under like circumstances. They are therefore sacraments of the same nature, use, and design. For,

4. THE spiritual meaning, and import of circumcision, and baptism is the same: they agree in their spiritual sense, and meaning. Under the Old Testament, when circumcision was the seal of the covenant of grace, regeneration is expressed by the term circumcision; as has been already noticed. Thus it is said,
*** Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your hearts, and be no more stiff-necked.* Again. ¶ ¶. *The LORD thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thy heart.*—By the word circumcision, as the apostle uses it, is meant, regeneration.
†† We are the circumcision, (the regenerate) who worship God in the spirit. So also it is used in this place. §§ *In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh,*

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¶ Gen. 17. 23. † Ezod. 12. 48. 49. ‡ *Act. 16.* 33. § *Act. 16.* 15. ¶ 1. Cor. 1. 16.

*** Deut. 10.* ¶ ¶ *Deut. 30.* 6. †† *Phil. 3.* 3. §§ *Col. 2.* 11.

by the circumcision of Christ. The term uncircumcision is sometimes used for a state of unregeneracy. As in the following places ¶ *Ye have brought into my sanctuary strangers uncircumcised in heart.* Thus saith the LORD, no stranger uncircumcised in heart,—shall enter into my sanctuary. Stephen the first christian martyr, in his defence before the council, makes use of the word in the same sense. **Ye stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in heart, and ears, ye do always resist the holy Ghost*—Thus it is seen that the sign, circumcision, is used for the thing signified by it, which was regeneration. It is thus used in the Old Testament ; and in the New too, sometimes, when reference is had to the Jewish institutions, or in speaking to the Jews.

BAPTISM or to be baptized, is used in the New Testament for regeneration, baptism being under this dispensation, the seal of the covenant of grace. This manner of using the word baptism, in the New Testament is not unfrequent. Two instances, only, will be noticed. One is the following ¶ *Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death?* Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death ; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the father, even so also we should walk in newness of life ; for if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. The other text is the following, † *Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him (Jesus Christ) through the faith of the operation of God who hath raised him from the dead.*

THE baptists, greatly abuse these passages
of

¶ *Ezek. 4. 4. 7. and 9. * 1 Th. 7. 51.*

¶ *Rom. 6. 3. 4. 5. † Col. 2. 12.*

of scripture, it is believed, by attempting to prove from them, that immersion is the only proper mode of administering baptism under the gospel. That the apostle has reference wholly to spiritual baptism or regeneration, and not at all to water baptism, is easy to be seen when we enter into the spirit, of the design, of the apostle; for he is here, not teaching those christians, who were, once heathens, how they must be baptized, but how they became christians. nor does he say one word about water baptism, in either of these passages, but he is treating wholly, on spiritual baptism, or regeneration, and a new and holy life,

FOUR instances have now been adduced out of the Old Testament, which have been compared with what we find in the New. All which conclude, strongly, in favour of the baptism of infants. The instructions and directions our Saviour gave to his apostles, when he sent them *to teach all nations*, and build up the gospel church, compare very particularly, with the direction God gave to Abraham, when he said *Walk before me, and be thou perfect*, which is descriptive of the character he, and his seed, were to sustain in all their generations. Also what Peter said to his hearers when he preached, and officiated the first time, under his new commission; telling them; *The promise is to you and to your children*, compares exactly with what God said to Abraham, *I will be a God to thee, and thy seed after thee*. So also the baptizing households, under the New Testament dispensation, is conformable to circumcising households under the Old Testament, which direction God gave to Abraham. And the spiritual meaning of baptism, and circumcision is the same.

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By thus comparing these things together, the connexion between the two Testaments is seen, in regard to the subject before us. And it is hence obviously clear that the New Testament takes up, and proceeds upon, the very same plan, which God established in the Old, in regard to the character of those who are members of his visible kingdom : and in regard, also to those who are the proper subjects of the seal of the covenant. The same character was *then* required, which is *now*, and the same persons are *now* subjects of the seal of the covenant, which were *then*. It hence appears that God, who first set up a visible church, so concerted the plan respecting it, that the necessity of any new order, command or law, respecting qualifications for church-membership, and also respecting infants being proper subjects of baptism, under the gospel, was foreclosed. When God established the covenant with Abraham, and appointed a seal of it, his infant seed were included in the covenant, and mentioned, particularly, as proper subjects of its Seal, and it appears to have been the design of God, that the seed of believers, should, in all ages, as was then fixed by the divine order, be included with their parents in the same gracious covenant. If not, why is not the mind of God, in this matter, plainly expressed ? why are not infants, in as plain terms cut off, by God, from a right to the seal of the covenant, under the New Testament, as they are placed, by him in a situation, under the Old Testament, to be the proper subjects of the seal of the covenant ? But this is not done.

If it were the mind of Christ, that the infant seed of those who are members of the visible church, should not be subjects of the seal of the

the covenant of grace, under the gospel, his silence, in this matter, when he was speaking to his apostles of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, and giving them directions for their future conduct, is altogether unaccountable. If so great a change were to be made, in the church, as to the subjects of the sealing ordinance under the gospel, as the baptists plead for, it is reasonable to suppose that our saviour would have not barely given some hints of it, to his apostles, but expressed his mind in terms plain, and explicit. But nothing is said by him from which they conclude, that the infants of such as are members of the church should not be baptized.

THAT they were to be baptized, was the sense in which the apostles understood our Saviour, and the mind of God, generally made known, is evident by what Peter said. *The promise is to you, and your children,* now under the gospel as it was before the new dispensation was set up. And the promise extends to the Gentiles, also and their children, if, by the special grace of God, they be called, and unite with His church. It is hence evident, that it was the design of God, that the duty, and the privilege, and the promise, as they respect believing parents, and their children, should proceed parallel with each other ; and go on uniformly in every age, through all ages, and all circumstances, and under different dispensations of the church, before Christ came, and afterward.

Is it not, then presumption, high handed presumption, indeed, for man, ignorant man, to repeal, or set aside a law, enacted by the authority of JEHOVAH ? To say that is wrong, which God says is right, is not this charging

God foolishly : God did command the circumcision of infants, and the law is not repealed, in reference to the subjects of the sealing ordinance and God, only has a right to repeal it. The command, therefore, in its genuine design, is still in full force. If the baptists will shew by the Bible, that God has revoked the order, as to the subjects, we will give up the dispute immediately. But this they cannot do. In the New Testament, there is nothing said, respecting those who were the subjects of the seal of the covenant God made with Abraham, contrary to what He then established, as a rule of procedure for Abraham, and his seed. The command, therefore, is still binding, and will be, until the head of the church shall order it otherwise. We must receive and practice upon religious institutions as they are established by God. And until we are taught otherwise by Him, we *must* believe. *That the infants of such as are members of the visible church are to be baptized.*

7. Obj. "THE Old Testament, say the Baptists is obsolete, and to argue from that, to the New Testament, is not admissible, in this case : The ~~precept~~^{precepts} being gathered from the Old Testament, and the conclusions for practice brought into the New, we cannot admit the consequence, that the Bible warrants the baptism of infants, because there is no command or example for it in the New Testament : and a command; or apostolic example we demand in order, to support the sentiment and practice."

1. Ans. THAT there is no command, in the New Testament enjoining the baptism of infants, is admitted : but as it has been observed there is that, which is tantamount to a command,

mand, if the divine plan through the Bible, be taken into view. Upon this idea so much has been observed, nothing further will here be added.

2. GOD gave directions for circumcising households, as has been observed ; and baptizing households was practiced by the apostles. Households are composed, generally, of adults & infants. The conclusion, therefore, is that they baptized infants. This being the case, for the baptism of infants, there is an apostolic example : But whether this be fact or not, there is evidence sufficient, it is conceived, from the general plan revealed in the word, of God respecting His church, to prove that the children of visible believers, have a right to baptism, on account of the relation they stand in to their parents.

3. This part of the objection, "To argue from the Old, to the New Testament" is so extremely weak, and directly in the face of scripture precedent, that no notice would be taken of it, if it were not designed, by the baptists, to militate against a truth judged to be highly important in the christian scheme. Arguing from the Old Testament was frequently practiced by our Saviour, and his apostles. The inspired writers of the New Testament, for illustration, or confirmation of what they wrote, cite passages out of the Old Testament, and, often refer back to it. This is a practice so very common in all parts of the New Testament, one example, only, will be mentioned. John Baptist, at a certain time, sent two of his disciples to our Saviour with this question * *Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?* He does not give them a direct answer, but says, *Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear, and see : the blind receive their sight,* and the

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* Mat. xi. 2. to 6.

tame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. Our Saviour by this refers these disciples to the Old Testament, for evidence of his Messiahship. What they now saw, and heard, they must compare with the prophecies which spake of the character, and works of the Messiah, and hence gain evidence who He was they were then conversing with, who said, and did those things, they now saw and heard. From hence they were to learn that HE was the person represented by prophecy in the Old Testament, *that should come*, in the character of the Messiah, and they were to look for no other.

IN these words our Saviour directs the Jews *¶ Search the scriptures.* By St. Paul the Bereans are commended, because they, + *Searched the scriptures daily whether these things were so.* No scriptures were, at that time, extant, but the Old Testament, only ; and to them these passages refer.

THE Baptists, therefore ought to be cautious how they contradict our Saviour, and the inspired pen-men of the New Testament, by saying we must not argue from the Old Testament to the New. The gospel dispensation was at that time, set up, or it was not. If it were not set up, then it did not commence with the preaching, and baptism of John, as the Baptists suppose. If it were set up, the Old Testament, they say, is of little or no use under the gospel. But our Saviour directs the Jews to *Search the scriptures*, viz. of the Old Testament. This inconsistency, the Baptists are desired to reconcile, if they can.

If we may not under the gospel dispensation recer

¶ Job. 5. 39. + Act. 17. 14.

recur to the Old Testament in support of any religious sentiment, or in vindication of any religious practice, in such instances where there is no positive command in the New Testament; the Baptists are asked on what they ground their conduct, in observing the christian sabbath. Many of them, it is true give it up, and confidently affirm, that the church, under the gospel, is liberated from an observance of a sabbath. In this they are perfectly consistent with themselves, though not with the scheme of christianity. There are others of them, however, who not so blind with error, and prejudice, yet retain a respect for the *LORD's day*. But they are inconsistent with their own scheme, Their appropriate sentiments, would be more harmonious, and consistent, with themselves, if they should universally reject the idea of a sabbath under the gospel. So long therefore, as they plead for it, they act inconsistently, with their own scheme of religious sentiments.

THE work of creation being completed, God immediately, instituted a sabbath. Mention is made of the sabbath, sundry times, * before the law was given on mount Sinai. When the law was there given, it is so expressed, as gives evidence that the day was well known to the Israelites: it was an old law revived, not a new one, then first enacted. God therefore, says || *Remember the Sabbath day*. Being placed as it is among the other moral precepts, it is believed to be, as the rest are, of perpetual obligation. But this law is not revived under the gospel, by a new precept, by Christ, or his apostles. If therefore, we may not argue from the Old Testament to the New in moral matters, the church, under the gospel

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*Exod. 16.23.25. &c. || Exod. 20.8.

is liberated from an observance of a sabbath. To be consistent with their own mode of reasoning, the Baptists therefore must, necessarily, give up the christian sabbath. Again.

BAPTISTS admit females to the Lord's supper. On what ground, it is asked? They have no warrant to admit them to the Lord's table, by any precept, or example, in the New Testament. Their conduct, in this, is entirely arbitrary: and more, it is directly contrary to their own sentiments, if it be, as they say, "inadmissible to argue from the Old Testament to the New, in matters which respect religious conduct." The baptists, perhaps will say, "They are as meet subjects to communicate as men." It is admitted. But this does not relieve the difficulty, in the argument, on their side, and does in fact bring them on the ground where we professedly stand. Here they shift the argument. When we plead for the baptism of infants, in a view of the divine order respecting circumcision, and the relation infants stand in to their parents; by the baptists this mode of reasoning is not admitted, because it is going back to the Old Testament; They insist upon a precept, or example in the New Testament, otherwise it is not right to baptize them. In our turn we insist, that they bring forward, a command, or an apostolic example to justify themselves in admitting women to communicate; if they cannot, they must, if they will appear honestly, and exhibit consistency between their sentiment, and their conduct, exclude in future, all females from their communion. Doing this, their sentiments and practice would accord. But if they still make the objection against the baptism of infants and continue to admit females to communicate:

nicate : the objection may be considered, a quibble, and their practice, an inconsistency.

8. Obj. THE baptists by way of objection frequently put this question, "What good does it do to baptize infants ? They are wholly insensible of what is done : There does not, therefore, appear, to us, to be any advantage, nor any propriety, in administering baptism to them."

1. Ans. CHRISTIANS ought to be cautious how they object against what is contained in, or by fair inference follows from what is revealed, in the word of God. Deists reject revelation, because they cannot comprehend many things contained in it : nor can they, they say, see the advantages, pretended by christians, resulting from it. Christians ought not thus to reason.

2. God never gave a command so hard, to any mere man, and one, which, to the eye of reason, was so unjust, and cruel, as this which he gave to Abraham when he said to him, **Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering.* What a command, from God to a father, ! But Abraham, by way of objection did not say ; "Lord what good will it do ? I cannot conceive what advantage there can be from sacrificeing my beloved Isaac, and therefore, I shall not do it." Many objections, might the pious patriarch have made, against a command, apparently, so unjust, and barbarous. But instead of making objections, because he could not see what good it would do, *He rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and*

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*Gen. 22. 23.

*clave the wood for a burnt offering, and rose up,
and went unto the place of which God had told
him.*

3. THE apostle asked, ¶ *What advantage then
hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circum-
cision.* To which he answers, *Much every
way: chiefly, because that unto them were com-
mitted the oracles of God.* If the baptists do not
discern them, there may be, notwithstanding,
many advantages, and great profit of the bap-
tism of infants. Circumcision was instituted
by God, so was baptism. The apostle says
there was *profit of circumcision*, and we believe
there is *profit of baptism*.

THIS sentiment would be attended to par-
ticularly, had not the foregoing discourses,
greatly exceeded in length, what was at first
proposed.

4. THE baptists are requested to inform us
what good it did to circumcise infants. They
were circumcised in consequence of a divine
command. What a vantage was there in it?
Let baptists answer this, if they be able. It
was not to give them a title to the land of Ca-
naan: for three generations were born, and
died before the seed of Abraham possessed that
land. Besides, if their inheriting that land was
sealed by circumcision, God did reject them
before they rejected him: the promise failed,
when they were performing the conditions of
it. This absurdity has been, already exposed.

THE baptism, and the circumcision of infants is
connected with exactly, the same advantages;
the same end is answered in one case, as in the
other; and both are appointed to be administer-
ed on the very same grounds. Infants are subjects
as capable of all the benefits, and advantages of
baptism,

baptism, as are adults. There is, therefore, the same propriety in the baptism of infants, as there is in the baptism of adults : as there was the same propriety, and reason for the circumcision of infants, as there was for the circumcision of adults.

5 MAN has no right to demand of God, a reason for his conduct, or his institutions. If he, in any instance assigns reasons, it is an act of condescending goodness. If the divine mind be expressed, we are under obligation to yield obedience to it, whether we can, or cannot see any advantages resulting from it. It is the prerogative of God to command, and obligation lies on us to obey.

ONE idea more will be attended to. The baptists insist on, what they call, *believers baptism*. So do we. The question between us is not, whether faith be necessary in order to be baptized ; but whether none but such as have actual faith ; or are subjects capable of exercising faith, are meet subjects of baptism. This they affirm, and we deny. When adults are addressed, who are capable of exercising faith, it is uniformly required of them, in order to their being baptized. Neither in the Old Testament, or New, can it be found, that any quality which might exist in the character of an adult, short of real holiness, was considered by God, or admitted, to be a qualification for church-membership ; If a person had real holiness, God required he should be circumcised, but not otherwise. *Walk before me and be thou perfect.* Then every man-child among you shall be circumcised. This is the rule established by the head of the church, under the Old Testament. The same rule is established, under the New. *If thou believest with all thy heart thou mayest*

mayest be baptized, said Philip to the eunuch. The matter is fixed as to adults, on the same plan, exactly, in both Testaments. And if we attend, carefully, to the statement made in the Bible, we shall find, it is judged, that the infants of those possessing the above character, had, in consequence of the holiness of their parents, a right to the seal of the covenant, under both Testaments. Under the Old Testament, the promise included the seed of believers : *I will be a God to thee, and thy seed after thee.* Just the same is it under the New ; for the apostle says *The promise is to you, and your children.* And it extends to the children of all whom God shall call : as in the Old Testament it extended to all their generations, and to those of other nations if they espoused the God, and religion of the Hebrews.

IT was *then* believers circumcision, as really as it *now* is believers baptism. And as circumcising their infants was *then* enjoined by God, so it is evident that the infants of those who are members of the visible church are to be baptized. Because the covenant which was in operation under the Old Testament, is in operation under the New : the same religion was *then* required which is *now*. *Then*, the same church was in existence, which exists *now* : God required the same qualification for church membership of the Israelites which he required of us Gentiles : and promises, which have for their object spiritual blessings, and privileges, are through the whole Bible, made to persons of the same character ; and persons of the same description are uniformly included in them. In regard to these things, as it was under the Old Testament, so it is now, and so it will be in the millennium. One uniform, and infinitely

infinitely wise plan, respecting the church, has been, now is, and through time, will be pursued, by the head of the church. And when he shall present it to himself a glorious church without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. The redeemed church will reap the blessed fruits of the Abrahamic covenant for ever and ever. AMEN.

CONCLUSION.

THE importance of attending, carefully, to the scriptures of the Old Testament appears, from a general view of our whole subject.

THE apostle says * *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.* If all scripture be given by inspiration of God ; and all, as the apostle here says, is profitable, we are then certainly, under obligation to attend, with care, and diligence to every part of the Bible. The Old Testament, as well as the New, claims our particular, and careful attention.

MANY considerations might be adduced to press on the minds of people, the importance of searching the scriptures of the Old Testament ; but the following, will, at this time, be principally attended to. viz. In the Old Testament the covenant of grace is brought to view, and in operation ; we see in this part of revelation, the infinitely holy God, setting up a visible church among fallen, sinful creatures : here we see also, the nature of the religion he enjoined on man, after the fall ; and what his duty was, and what his comforts, and enjoyments should be, if he were obedient to the will of

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God.

* 2. Tim. 3. 16.

God. God also in the Old Testament states the nature of the church he had set up, and explains, with clearness, and precision, the character of those who were meet subjects of church-membership, and many things in regard to his providential government of the world, as it respected his church, under that dispensation. Besides,

THE Old Testament looks forward to the New, and the two dispensations are connected together, indissolubly, in respect to duty, and enjoyment, religion, and character, in a word, every thing that is spiritual, and holy; and so exhibits but one church, thro' all the Eible.

FOR a knowledge of the nature of the religion required by God, of fallen man; the character of the church, which he designed should exist in this world; and what qualifications were requisite to constitute persons meet subjects of his spiritual kingdom; we are not indebted, in the first instance, to the scriptures of the New Testament. No; Jesus Christ revealed, to his church, those important truths, in the Old Testament. And if people were not guilty of criminal negligence in passing by the scriptures of the Old Testament, they would discern an heavenly, and divine beauty, and glory in the writings of Moses, and the prophets, which is now: because they search not those scriptures, hidden from them.

IF the scriptures of the Old Testament were duly attended, and deeply studied, it will be seen, that God, when he set up a church in this world, among fallen men, was doing a most stupendous work, in effecting which, the most astonishing scenes would open to the view of the whole intelligent system, in the execution of

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the eternal decrees of God.—That God was effecting a glorious building, and the work, from age to age, was in progression, always rising higher and higher, and so advancing towards a state of greater perfection.—That all events which took place, had, on the whole, a favorable aspect on the church, and were over-ruled for the safety, and good of the church, and subordinated to advance the interest of God's holy and spiritual kingdom.

How many sentiments, coincident with these might be recapitulated, from the Old Testament? But we cannot enlarge. Here is enough to warm pious hearts, and if duly attended, stimulate christians to study the Old Testament.

THE Old Testament reflects a glory on the New ; and the New Testament reflects a glory on the Old. Neither can be so well understood, separately, as when they are viewed conjointly ; because they help to explain each other, and are perfectly harmonious. Those, therefore, who neglect the Old Testament, will of course, be deficient in regard to much scripture knowledge, to obtain which, God hath put them under advantage. In this way they abuse the divine goodness, and are highly criminal in the sight of God.

WHEN a wicked world was destroyed, Noah was preserved. When Pharaoh, and his host were drowned in the red sea, the Israelites were saved. When Haman had laid a plan to exterminate all the Jews, and felt perfectly sure of accomplishing his wicked design, we soon see Haman hung on his own gallows, and the Jews delivered. Babylon is ransacked by the Medes, and Persians ; immediately upon this the Jews are liberated by Cyrus, and are permitted to return to Jerusalem, and rebuild

the city, and temple. Not to mention other surprising interpositions of divine providence in behalf of the church, which are recorded in the Old Testament. Have we not reason to believe, that those wonderful works of God, in this world, which were wrought for the sake, and on account of his church, will afford matter for pleasing meditation to the redeemed, and all holy Beings in heaven ? And have we not reason to conclude, that their reviews of the divine government, will be sources of happiness and joy, exceedingly great ? It will doubtless be so. These contemplations of the ways of God will warm their hearts with love, and excite their thankful, humble, joyful praise. Oh then, let us now study the Old Testament ! and see what great things God did for his church in former times, and not suffer it to lie neglected.

A neglect of the Old Testament, the consequence of which has been, and still is, a culpable ignorance of the true scripture plan of the church, is one reason Pædobaptists are not always able to silence, and confound the Baptists. If Moses and the prophets, be understood according to the plain, and obvious meaning of language it would be as easily seen as the sun in a fair day ; that one uniform plan, as it respects, the church, runs through the whole Bible : the same character is uniformly required : the same spiritual, and holy religion is every where enjoined ; and the same holy and spiritual enjoyments, are, uniformly, the objects of the promises. The church therefore, is ever the same. For that which is essential to the existence of the church is permanent. And that which was essential to the existence of God's church always, existed in it, or it would not have

have been a church of God, but the church,
of the kingdom of Satan.

If christians had always made the word of God the rule of their faith, and practice, and in no instance, set up, for a standard, the opinions of men, the world would not, for a few centuries past, been troubled with the peculiar sentiments of the baptists. When the whole divine plan, respecting the church as it is laid before us in divine revelation, is taken up, and pursued, they have not a single text by which they can support their appropriate sentiments.

"AN unholy church!" For those who call themselves christians, and with a Bible before them to say, That the church under the Old Testament, which was set up by the special appointment of God, was an unholy church, is enough to make the pious heart ache. It is an evidence of very great ignorance of the christian revelation; and is an evidence, that men's judgments, are sometimes influenced more by prejudice, than truth, when they are endeavoring to support an hypothesis, which, they wish might be true.

SEARCH *the scriptures*, and it will be seen, that none of the inspired pen-men of the Old, or New Testament, labored more earnestly, in their writings, than did Moses, to impress on the Israelites the absolute necessity of holiness: He urges the duty of love to God, in *more* particular instances, than any other writer, we do not except even the apostle John. And it is plain to be seen, that the duty was urged on the Israelites upon this interesting idea, that their being the people of God, and enjoying promised blessings depended solely, on their being holy; or complying with the great law of LOVE.

If the true character of God be rightly understood, we should not need a revelation from heaven, to teach us that it would be totally incompatible for a being whose character was infinitely holy, to set up, and hold communion with an unholy church. But we know what the character of God is, and we know what character he required his church to sustain when he said, *Be ye holy, for I am holy.*

If it be admitted by the Baptists that the church under the Old Testament was holy, and that holiness of heart was there required, and necessary to church-membership, they know that this consequence will follow, unavoidably, viz. That the church under the Old, and New dispensation, is the same. This is according to Bible representation. Their particular scheme then is, totally, overthrown. For when God said to Abraham, *I will be a God to thee, and thy seed after thee,* it respected, not in a limited sense, the natural posterity of Abraham only ; in the line of Isaac, and Jacob, but in an extensive sense, including all, those who were to be believers, under that dispensation, as was Abraham, and their seed ; and thus to proceed forever. And therefore as Peter says the promise is still in operation. It is, *to you and your children.* These consequences the Baptists know must follow if they give up their ideas about an unholy church, and then their cause is ruined. Because the infants of such as are members of the visible church, will, upon this ground, have according to the whole Bible plan, a right to be baptized.

To the law, and the testimony : That is / standard, by which every religious scheme, a sentiment will be tested. The plan adopted and pursued, by the writer of these discourses

is in some respects, new and different from those who have written in defence of infant Baptism. It he has kept on Bible ground, as has been his aim, what is now presented to the public, will, it is hoped, aid the cause of religion, by strengthening the feeble minded, by confirming the doubting, and exciting all to **SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES.**

IN every part of divine revelation, the same character of God is brought to view. Man, in every part of the Bible, is represented under the same character, since the fall. A covenant of grace, God was pleased to reveal to man, soon after the fall, in which he promised a saviour, and salvation to sinners through HIM. Which covenant was in operation under the whole of the Old Testament dispensation; is still operating, & will be through time & the consequences and glorious fruits of it will be enjoyed in eternity, forever, and ever. A church we find has been set up among sinful creatures, in this world, by the particular direction of God. Himself forming ~~the~~ the constitution of the church, God was pleased to include the seed of believers, with themselves. Which was the case under the Old, and *is* the case under the New Testament. This church has existed, and does, and will exist through time, and eternity.

OH what important discoveries God has made in his word! What glorious things are spoken of the city of our God? The more we know, the more we shall admire: abundantly we drink the waters of the sanctuary, the more happiness, we should enjoy. The more frequently we taste the streams, which make glad the city of our God, the more, the glory of God's character, and works; the glory, and beauty of

the church ; the Glory and excellency of divine truth, will warm, and animate our souls, and fill us with joy and peace in believing. Let us then, as did the Bereans, Search the scriptures daily. Whether these things be so. May God give us eyes to see, and ears to hear, and hearts to understand.

A M E N.







